

OBSERVATIONS

ON

THE THREE FIRST VOLUMES

OF THE

HISTORY

OF

ENGLISH POETRY.

IN A

FAMILIAR LETTER TO THE AUTHOR.

RIEN N'EST BEAU QUE LE VRAI; LE VRAI SEUL EST AIMABLE.

BOILEAU.

L O N D O N:

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These OBSERVATIONS, printed in the size of Mr. WAR-
TONS HISTORY, are extremely proper to be bound up
with that celebrated work, to which they will be
found a very useful APPENDIX.



OBSERVATIONS, &c.

To the Revd. Mr. WARTON.

S I R,

YOU will have no reason to be either alarmed or offended at a mode of address, which every reader has a right to adopt. The author of a book upon a subject designed for and attractive of public attention gives a general challenge. If his facts and opinions stand the test of a fair and candid enquiry, he is entitled to universal patronage and approbation: if not, contempt and oblivion should be his fate. The "History of English Poetry" stands high in public estimation; the subject is equally curious, interesting, and abstruse: much, very much, of its success is, undoubtedly, to be ascribed to the opinion generally entertained of your veracity and care as a historian; and upon an idea so universal, so satisfactory, and hitherto so undisturbed, it may seem invidious not to have been content entirely to rely. I, however, Sir, am somewhat too restless in my enquiries, too desirous of being able to judge for myself, to be satisfied either with a writers reputation, or with the opinion of the world; at least, when I have it in my power to learn how deservedly that reputation has been acquired, or how justly that opinion is formed. In pursuit of these objects, I have read and examined your great and important work with some degree of attention and accuracy; and I now present you with the result of my enquiries: the public disclosure of which will not, I flatter myself, either to you, or your numerous readers, prove an unacceptable service. If, in some few instances, I may be thought to have betrayed a warmth of expression, from which reputation so high, abilities so uncommon, and a profession so sacred, ought to have been wholly exempt, let me, once for all, observe, that, having no other object in view, no other end to answer, than truth and justice, I neither wish nor intend to consider you otherwise than as author of the work in question. Personal motives I cannot possibly have been influenced by, and

B

utterly

utterly disavow. And were you able to falsify every charge I have here brought against you, whatever might be your severity, I should kiss the rod with resignation, and even pleasure: as, I assure you, the satisfaction I should have experienced, in finding your work entirely free from error, would have been infinitely beyond any I can be supposed to feel, in thus making myself the public instrument of its detection.

V O L. I.

Preface.

Page vi.

That "some perhaps will be of opinion, that these annals ought to have commenced with a view of Saxon poetry," is a very natural and judicious conjecture. "The legitimate illustration of that jejune and intricate subject," would undoubtedly "have doubled 'your' labour," and required, I fear, a more profound and extensive erudition, as well as a more penetrating judgment, than were, perhaps, necessary for the æra whence you have thought proper to deduce this important history. "That the Saxon language is familiar only to a few learned antiquaries, that our Saxon poems are little more than religious rhapsodies, and that scarce any compositions remain marked with the native images of that people in their pagan state (1)," we will readily allow; because, admitting the positions to be true, they prove nothing; they are perfectly harmless: But, "that the Saxon poetry has NO CONNECTION with the nature and purpose of 'your' PRESENT UNDERTAKING," is an assertion, one may safely venture to say, as new as it is ill-grounded, and full of mischief. Though the great revolution produced by the Norman invaders effected "that signal change in our policy, constitution, and public manners," which has in its consequences "reached modern times," yet neither the Saxon people nor the Saxon tongue was thereby eradicated. You, Sir, have sometimes been a biographer; and did you ever find it necessary to commence the story of your hero at the 15th or 16th year of his age, and to assert that the time of his birth and infancy had no connection with the story of his life, because, forsooth, he was become a very different person when grown up and sent to college, from what he was when born, breeched, and sent to school? And yet one may well doubt, whether such an apology would not have answered your purpose just as effectually in that case, as your reason for declining to enter upon the state of

(1) It may seem a very extraordinary idea in a Christian minister, and who is not only the historian of poets, but a poet himself, that these people could not have a poetical genius, because they were not pagans; and that religion and poetry are incompatible. The notion, however strange, may yet in some degree be just: The Saxons, like many other nations, really seem to have got very little "by the *swamp*."

the Saxon poetry does in this. The truth is, that the origin and fundamental principles, as well of our language as of our poetry, are to be sought for among the remains of the Saxon literature (2); and he who shall tell us that the English and Saxon languages have no sort of connection with each other, is either deceived himself, or finds it his interest to deceive others,—by sheltering his own ignorance or inactivity under a formidable and laboured shew of difficulty and uselessness, equally visionary, delusive, and pernicious.

P. viii.

Whether you have gratified “the reader of taste,” by your exertions on this subject, I know not; but of this I am confident, that “the antiquarian” will have greater reason to be dissatisfied with being perplexed or misled, than to thank you for having engaged in a task for which it will appear you have been so little qualified.

I shall pass by the two dissertations which precede your history without observation (3); not that I think them altogether just and proper, but because I find that a strict examination would require greater leisure, and more intense application, as well as a more frequent reference to the numerous and uncommon books there quoted (many of which I have, by the way, much reason to suspect you never consulted, nor even ever saw) than I am at present either willing or able to devote to it. I do not, at the same time, wish to detract from whatever merit you may have in this ingenious structure: I only desire the reader to be particularly cautious and distrustful, as he wanders over these extensive regions of FABLE and ROMANCE. One may, however, venture to assert, that, let your facts and reasonings in the first of these dissertations be ever so just, yet will they by no means prove any thing like what you produce them for,—the introduction of romantic fiction into Europe; which is rather to be sought for in the history of the Gauls, or other Celtic nations, who were settled

(2) You admit this by the very first page of your history; you doubtless perceived your inconsistency, though you did not, I suppose, expect that any of your readers would do so.

(3) You have somewhere observed, that we have a kind of malicious pleasure in detecting the secret resources and petty thefts of a great writer; and the remark is just and natural, with respect to the pleasure; which does not, I trust, so much result from malice, as from a secret regard to truth, and an indignant warmth at seeing the daw strut abroad in his stolen plumes. Whatever may be the cause, I shall in the course of this enquiry have many opportunities of proving the justice of the observation. And, firstly, you will be pleased to take notice, that the greatest and best part of your note (1) (Dis. I. sign. a. 4. b.) in which you, with an equal parade of ingenuity and learning, account for an interpolation, by Geoffrey of Monmouth, into his translation of the British history, has been found to be almost literally *borrowed* from Mr. Cartes preface to the first vol. of his History of England. I have likewise some little reason to suppose, though I do not think worth my while to prove, that you owe more obligation to Sheltons translation of Wottons View of Dr. Hickeses Thesaurus, than to the Thesaurus itself.

in Europe some thousand years before you suppose the Goths to have arrived in this part of the world, and had doubtless "a very sufficient stock of lies of their own growth (4)," without being beholden to Asiatic adventurers.

I shall not give myself the trouble to minute *every* inaccuracy I might discover in the citations you have introduced from the old metrical legends, between your 7th and 26th page: I take it for granted they are just as correct as I shall prove others to be, which you have given from MSS. in the Cotton and Harleian libraries; many of which, as one may easily perceive, by your method of quoting, referring to, or registering them, you have certainly never seen.

P. 26.

One cannot help taking notice of your frequent forwardness in determining the age of poetical compositions, or the MSS. which contain them. In this page you produce a love-song, the oldest you can discover, which you "would place before or about the year 1200." This you cite from a MS. appearing, as you elsewhere (5) tell us, to be of the hand-writing of the reign of king Edward the first: but *an Elegy upon his DEATH*, which you have printed, in another place (6), from this very MS. might have served to shew you the absurdity of dating it in his LIFE-TIME. The truth is, the book evidently appears to have been written in the reign of his son and successor; and there is not the least reason for concluding any poem in it to be much older than the year 1300.

The Revd. Dr. Percy (now lord bishop of Dromore), whose knowledge in these matters seems pretty much upon a level with your own, has brought its age down so low as the reign of king Richard II. (7)

I cannot, willingly, dismiss this same love-song, without giving a specimen or two of the extreme correctness with which it is printed, and the extreme propriety with which it is explained.

"With lokkes leffiche and longe."

Lefliche, you say, is "lively;" and a most curious explanation to be sure it is! The *lively locks* of a young lady! Charming creature! she must have been a perfect Medusa! But, possibly, you mistook *lokkes* for *looks*; and then we have the *lively and long looks* of the said fair one! If this famous history of yours should have the great and unmerited good fortune to come to a second edition, you will do well to subtract one fault, by correcting *lively* to *lovely*; and another, by writing *lura lumes* instead of *bire limmes*: for though old poetry may be the same thing to you, sense or nonsense, it may not be so to every one who is tempted to look into your book. The great blank, a few lines

(4) Tyrwhitt *versus* Warburton. Supplement to Shakspeare, i. 373. (5) P. 28.

(6) P. 103.

(7) Reliques of Ancient Poetry, ii. 3.

further,

further, you may fill up with the little word *wes*: but, indeed, you would do much better to get a fresh transcript, as there are fifty other mistakes in the copy you have printed: and all the rest of the extracts from this and every other MS. throughout the volume, and indeed the whole work, are in the same predicament. It would, moreover, be as well, not to call the verses beginning

“ Hyrdmen [hem] hatieth ant vch mones hyne,”

a different ballad from that on the lawyers; as, had you inspected the MS. instead of the catalogue, you would have found both to be one and the same piece.

P. 43, 44, 45, 46.

We are here favoured with a satyrical ballad upon Richard king of the Romans, brother to our Henry III. preserved in the above MS. which you, in a note, tell us you “ had transcribed from the British Museum, and written the explanations upon, BEFORE ‘ you ’ knew that it was printed in the SECOND [FIRST] edition of Doctor Percy’s Ballads.”—Now, Mr. Warton, listen to me for a single moment, and “ *mark how a plain tale shall put you down.*” Dr. (now Bp.) Percy, in printing this song, has taken some liberties with the orthography and language (and where is the piece with which he has not taken such liberties?) in particular, he has altered the word *cop* (8), which he did *not* understand, to *for*, which, it is to be supposed, he *did*. In this alteration, and indeed throughout the whole poem, you, Mr. Warton, have followed him with a most literal and servile exactness. Still, however, you might have escaped undetected, and have pilfered “ your ingenious friend and fellow-labourer ” with safety; but, unluckily, his lordships accuracy, being much of a piece with your own, suffered him to omit a complete stanza; which could not possibly have eluded the observation of a second copyist: but I look in vain for it in YOUR (different) transcript. However, as it may be some small consolation to you in this unfortunate dilemma, I will here give it you.

Be þe luef be þe loht fire edward,
þou shalt ride sporeles o þy lyard.
Al þe ryhte way to douere ward
Shalt þou never more breke foreward
And þat rewep fore.
Edward þou dudest ase a shreward
For foke þyn emes lore.
Richard &c.

(8) “ Sire Simond de Montfort hath suore by ys *cop*,” i. e. cap or head. Thus, in the ancient French romance of Girart de Vienne, MS.

P. mon cap dist .G. men uoil gardar.

This omission of the ingenious prelate is the more astonishing, not onely as the verse immediately follows what he has copyed, but because Mr. Wanley says, in his catalogue, that the song expressly mentions prince Edward, which it onely does in this verse (9).

I shall make no remark on the obvious wonder of your forgetting the principal contents of a book, from which you are continually quoting passages—as your own; a favour, indeed, that many writers have to acknowledge, beside his lordship of Dromore.

P. 52.

“The king and ys conseil *radde* the stones for to fette.”

Radde you boldly say is *Rode*. Writers who want in knowlege should abound in care. Had you read three lines further, you would have discovered that the king and his council did not *ride*.—It means *advised*.

P. 53.

No one, I sincerely believe, except yourself, could have supposed, for a moment, that the name of HENGIST deserved the slightest attention, in giving the etymology of the word STONEHENGE:—than which nothing can be more simple and apparent; as it is communicated by the word itself: *Stan-henge; hanging stone.*

P. 58.

“In the reign of Henry the sixth, we find a ballad stuck on the gates of the royal palace. . . . This piece is preserved in the Ashmolean museum.”

It is no ballad; and the reference would have been just as easy, and much more useful, to Hearnes HEMINGI CHARTULARIUM, p. 663. Whence, I dare lay my life, you had your information.

P. 67.

“What maner schap with me so *ferd*.”

Why, *Lay*? Fared.

“Of elde avenaunt.”

Not, “I was then young and beautiful,” but—*of a fit age.*

It may not be improper, once for all, to warn the reader, that you interpret every where at random; and not because you perfectly understand, but because you are entirely ignorant of, the word you pretend to explain. I must, however, do you the justice to except a variety of words, to which you have affixed

(9) At p. 103, is another poem [the Elegy on Ed. I.] from the Reliques; but there too it escaped you, till just before the work went to the press, that the Dr. had printed it. *Credat Judæus Apella; non ego.*

the proper meanings, where the merest school-boy could not have been at a loss for them : and for the multitude of really difficult ones which you have left untouched, your readers owe you infinite obligations.

P. 68.

Poor old Cotgrave is here attacked for, what you call, absurdly interpreting *mangoneau* (*magnet* in your text) *an old-fashioned sling*. You, indeed, say, "it is a *catapult* or *battering ram* (10)." But, pray, Mr. Warton, who told you so? or where did you learn that a *catapult* was the same thing as a *battering ram*? Cotgrave undoubtedly knew a thousand million times more of the matter than you can do : and, to prove that you know nothing at all about it, let me intreat you to read your own text ; you will there find that the *magnets* were to be used by people UPON the wall, against those who came to assail it. Was that the place and use of a *battering ram*? The very passage shews Cotgrave to be right : and his explanation is further confirmed by a line at p. 72, where, though the word *magneles* is joined with *slinges*, and evidently signifies something of the same nature, you have the confidence to refer the reader to the above nonsense at p. 68.

P. 75.

"Danz Robert of Meltone."

"Sir Robert of Malton. It appears from hence, that he was born at *Malton* in *Lincolnshire*." And why not at Malton in *Yorkshire*? or why, indeed, at any *Malton*? There are still places called *Melton*. But do you suppose, that when a person is designed *of* such a place, it is always an evidence he was *born* at it?

P. 79.

"*Vuel* thing;" "well, good." P. 82. "*Vuel* thing;" "Vile."

Such sensible people, Mr. Warton, as yourself, generally take care to be very consistent. Is a *good* thing a *vile* one?

P. 110.

"Before these expeditions into the East became fashionable, the principal and leading subjects of the old fablers were the achievements of king

(10) I observe, that this ingenious explication is, with many other blunders, of greater and less consequence, afterwards directed to be destroyed. You should, however, have destroyed it yourself. It would not, surely, be a sufficient atonement for the impudence or ignorance of a writer, whose work was one continued mistake, to direct his readers to—*delete* the whole. You will not, however, have many similar instances of hardship to complain of.

Arthur.

Arthur with his knights of the round table, and of Charlemagne with his twelve peers. But in the romances written after the holy war, a new set of champions, of conquests and of countries, were introduced. Trebizonde took place of Roncevalles, and Godfrey of Bulloigne, Solyman, Nouraddin, the caliphs, the souldans, and the cities of Ægypt and Syria, became the favourite topics."

And now, Mr. Warton, after this very sublime Eastern flight, let me ask, for I dare say many of your readers would be glad to know, what time you are pleased to call the fashionable æra of the Crusade. Was it when Godfrey captured Jerusalem in 1099? or when Richard I. planted the English standard upon the walls of Acon in 1191? If the first, you will, I am afraid, be at a loss to produce a single romance upon the subject of king Arthur, of Charlemagne, or of Roncesvalles. If the second, then I am to enquire where a romance is to be found, any way near that age, or, indeed, of any other, which treats of Trebizond, independent of the history of Charlemagne? and, excepting, perhaps, a book or two of the acts of Godfrey and Baldwin, where are these favourite romances of Solyman, Nouraddin, the caliphs, the soldans, Egypt, and Syria, which cut such a pompous figure in the above extract? Shall I likewise give you the trouble to recollect your authority for making the whole body of the troubadours of Provence take up arms, and follow their barons, "in prodigious multitudes," to the conquest of Jerusalem? That some few of these poets, in the service and courts of princes, should be permitted to accompany their lords to the crusade, and that others, of inferior rank, might enter into and mix with the army, may be, and I fancy is, very true: but that a single province should, at that or any other time, contain such *prodigious multitudes* of itinerant minstrels, is an assertion as hypothetic and insupportable, as it is incredible and absurd. It will, moreover, appear, that the Provençal troubadours were then (*i. e.* about the latter crusade, for you fix upon neither) and for some time after, a respectable and superior description of men.

P. III.

"The elder Spanish romances have *professedly* more Arabian allusions than any other."—Will you, Mr. Warton, do us the favour to name a single one of those elder Spanish romances, with *any* Arabian allusion? I know you cannot. Cervantes has, indeed, pretended that the author of Don Quixote was an Arabian. And any person acquainted with the romantic books published about his own time (11) will see the force and propriety of this piece of satire. Those critics, and we know well enough who they are, that supposed Spain to have learned the art of romance-writing from the Arabians, and to have afterwards communicated it to the rest of Europe, were, unfortunately, ignorant that this species of composition was every where cultivated, and had been so for centuries, before it is known to have even existed in Spain. To prove that the Spaniards imitated the Moors (and they have not a single ro-

(11) Historia de Don Rodrigo, 1592, 1600, 4to. Historia de las guerras civiles de Granada, 1604, 8vo.

mance (at least what we mean by romance) to be given in evidence upon the occasion) it should first be made appear, from better authority than the whimsical reveries of self-conceited hypothetics, that those Arabians had any such performances among them. Huet does *not* seem to favour any such system: he uses the word *romance* with the greatest propriety: and the *sophistry* and *ignorance* of that (would-have-been) universal critic (and there was never wanting either a fool to think, or a parasite to call him so) who undertook and pretended to correct him, has been sufficiently *exposed* and *chastised* by one very well acquainted with the merits of both (12).

P. 165.

The Sowdan of Damascus is represented in the text as riding with great violence to attack king Richard; and the romance says,

“ A FAUCON BRODE in honde he bare,
 “ For he thoght he wold thare
 “ Have slayne Rycharde with treasowne.”

This *faucon brode* you most sagaciously interpret to be a BIRD! wonderful genius!—What had not the king to dread from an enemy so terribly accoutered! “ The Soldan (continues this your admirable exposition) is represented as meeting Richard with a *hawk* on his fist, to shew indifference, or a *contempt for his adversary*; and that he came rather prepared for the CHACE than the COMBAT.” And so you go on, through a whole page, and a long note, to prove that other great men formerly carried hawks on their fist, but *never*, as you very ingeniously conclude, *going to battle*: and yet the Soldan is here in the midst of an engagement, and riding full speed to assail his antagonist, with a FAULCON in (not on) his hand, instead of a SABRE!—Though such unparalleled ignorance, such matchless effrontery, is not, Mr. Warton, in my humble opinion, worthy of any thing but castigation or contempt, yet, should there be a single person, beside yourself, who can mistake the meaning of so plain, so obvious a passage (which I much suspect to have been corrupted in coming through your hands) I shall beg leave to inform him, that a FAUCON BRODE is nothing more or less than a BROAD FAUCHION.

P. 188.

“ With ffoxes tails mony aboute.”

“ In many knots.” Clearly, with many foxes tails about him.

P. 189.

I stop here to acquaint you, that ROBERT LE DIABLE is a *totally different personage* from ROBERT OF CICYLE. I shall have a little more to say to you on your intimacy with these two gentlemen by and by.

P. 198.

Pray, Mr. Warton, shall I take the liberty to ask you, in what "ROMANTIC HISTORY OF THE PALADINS" we shall find "William Ferrabras and his brethren, sons of Tancred the Norman, [who] acquired the signories of Apulia and Calabria, about the year 1230?"

P. 200.

"It is well known that *anciently* in England *LADIES* were *sheriffs* of *counties*." This is a circumstance of which you, who seem to know so many strange things, may be perfectly satisfied. Some of your readers, though, I imagine, would have been equally obliged to you, if you had condescended to produce an instance or two of the fact:—but that, I am afraid, would have been somewhat difficult to compass (13).

P. 205.

"The metrical romance, entitled, *La [Le] Mort Arthure* . . . is supposed by the learned and accurate Wanley to be a translation from the French: who adds, that it is not perhaps older than the times of Henry the seventh. But as it abounds with many Saxon words, and *SEEMS* to be quoted in *Syr Bevis*, I have given it a place here (14)."

The learning and accuracy of Mr. Wanley had not, however, it should seem, the power to convince you that a poem no older than the reign of Henry VII. could not possibly belong to that of Edward II. But it often, indeed, suits ones purpose best to be ignorant. Mr. Wanley says, the writer of this romance "useth many Saxon or obsolete words:" and Dr. Percy observes, that "it *SEEMS* to be quoted in *Syr Bevis*," (your own expression!) which is as unlikely as it is untrue. However, to settle all differences upon the subject (and you had certainly, Mr. Warton, on these puzzling occasions, better suffer yourself to be guided by so good a judge as Mr. Wanley, than, being blind yourself, lead your blind readers into the ditch) I can assure you, that this same romance (and one might have almost guessed it by the title) is neither more nor less than a good part of *CAXTONS Prose Book* reduced into metre; and neither is, nor possibly can be, older than the reign of Henry the seventh.

P. 208.

"Chaucer mentions in *Sir Topaz*, among others, the romantic poems of *SIR BLANDAMOURE*, *Sir Libeaux*, and *Sir Ippotis*. Of the former, I find nothing more than the name occurring in *SIR LIBEAUX*." And do you, Mr. Warton, *really* find the name there? Dr. Percy, indeed, says that the word (*Blandamoure*, I suppose) occurs in *LIBEAUX*; and very modestly

(13) The hereditary sheriffdom of Westmoreland has been, and may still be, in a female: and to this, though it be nothing to the purpose, you may, perhaps, mean to allude.

(14) That is, before or about the time of king Edward II.

observes,

observes, "that 'tis possible Chaucers memory deceived him!" But you, Mr. Warton, will be pleased to mark: 1. that Chaucer does NOT mention SIR BLANDAMOURE (the *title* is conferred by yourself (15)); he onely names

Syr Libeaus and Pleindamoure.

And, 2. I am credibly informed, that no such name as either Blandamoure or Pleindamoure is to be found in Lybeaus: so that, it is probable, either your own eyes, or (as I rather suppose) those of your right reverend and learned friend, have seen the thing which was not.

"Among Tanners manuscripts (you say) we have the *Weddyng of Sir Gawain*, Numb. 455. Bibl. Bodl." But are you sure, Mr. Warton, that this reference is accurate:—there was, I am well assured, no such thing in the article when it was, not long since, inspected for this very purpose.

You say, you think you "have somewhere seen a romance in verse, entitled, *The Turke and Gawaine*." The bishop of Dromore says he has it in his FOLIO MS. Did you ever SEE THAT?

P. 216.

"I shulde swithe don my lord kyng to wyte."

Thus ingeniously explained: "I should *make haste* my lord the king to know," instead of, *I should quickly* do him to wit, i. e. *let him know*.

P. 219.

"Our brother we mowe hym clepe *wel*."

"WEL, i. e. SOMETIMES." O rare T. W!

P. 222.

"*Pelles*, skins." Ignorance! velvet mantles, *palls*.

P. 236.

"Fitz-Stephen mentions, at the end of his tract, "*Imperatricem Matildem, Henricum tertium, et beatum Thomam. &c.*" p. 483." Upon which you make the following profound and sagacious remark: "Henry the third did not accede till the year 1216. Perhaps he (Fitz-Stephen) implied *futurum regem tertium*." You conclude then, no doubt, that he spoke by the spirit of prophecy; for this Henry the third was not born till 1207, thirty-five years after Becket's assassination, and sometime, most probably, after Fitz-Stephens death. But I will, as I have often done, and shall, throughout my letter, have frequent occasion to do, give you a little information upon this subject, of which you seem very much in need.

1. You do not (at least did not) understand the passage you have here imperfectly quoted, or you must have perceived that the author only mentions

(15) You have, on this occasion, I see, been very liberal of your knightly favours:—having bestowed the same honour upon poor master *Ypotis*. It would not be amiss to christen it—the *Order of Ignorance*.

these three great personages in this place, because they were *born* in LONDON. 2. Henry the third (who "acceded in 1216") as I think you must have been some time or other told, was *born* at WINCHESTER; which place, for aught I know, might likewise have the honour of giving birth to yourself. 3. Fitz-Stephen is not speaking of a king *in futuro*, but of one *in esse*, namely, Henry the younger, son to Henry II. and grandson to the empress Matilda, who was crowned king in the life-time of his father, and is expressly stiled HENRICUS TERTIUS, by Mathew Paris, William of Newbury, and several others of our early historians.—Particulars known to any person; but of which I do not at all wonder that you should be ignorant, or upon which, that you should write; as you seem to be no better acquainted with any one point you have handled in the whole course of your blundering work.

P. 256.—265.

This *rubbiß* (16) fills up rarely, Mr. Warton! we shall soon make a volume!

P. 306, note (y).

The absurdity of the argument against ecclesiastical establishments will not be readily perceived by any but a thorough-bred Oxonian tory-ry High-churchman.

P. 307.

The folly and injustice of your censure on Wickliffe, that his attacks on the superstitions of his age proceeded from resentment, might have been avoided, had you known when he begun to write, and when he was ejected from his wardenship; particulars which you might easily have learned from the Biographia Britannica.

P. 309.

I should be glad to know from what authority, or intrinsic or extrinsic evidence, you infer, that the romance of Alexander, quoted in this page, was written in imitation of the stile and manner of Piers Plowman; which it certainly is not. Indeed, it rather seems to be a much earlier composition. There is, I can assure you, more reason against LONGLANDS title to the authorship of Piers Plowman than you are aware of.

P. 388.

"Our author [*i. e.* Chaucer, in his *Troilus and Cresseida*] from his excessive fondness for Statius, has been guilty of a very diverting double-anachronism."

I wish not to interrupt the merriment occasioned by this notable discovery:—But, after you have sufficiently enjoyed your laugh,—let me ask you, where this same diverting double anachronism exists—out of your own imagination,—

(16) Long extracts from the *Pricke of Conscience*; the most stupid miserable stuff that the historian could any where discover; and of which no person can possibly read three lines.

fertile enough, perhaps, in creations of this kind. Why might not Cressid be represented by Chaucer as reading the STORY OF THEBES? Was the destruction of that city subsequent to the siege of Troy? And, admitting that Chaucer derived all his own knowledge from the THEBAID, does CASSANDRA ever mention the name of STATIUS?

P. 412.

You are here pleased to tell us, that "AMADIS DE GAUL" had a sword which baffled the force of enchantments; and refer to Don Quixote as your authority: but you are continually involving yourself in some unfortunate dilemma. For, in the 1st place, Amadis de Gaul had NOT such a sword: and, 2dly, Don Quixote does NOT say he HAD. He, indeed, speaks of the sword which belonged to "*Amadis, quando se llamava, el Cavallero de la ardiente espada* (17)," when he called himself, *the Knight of the burning sword*: and, if you had been in the least degree acquainted with the matter, you would have known that it is not to AMADIS DE GAUL, but to AMADIS OF GREECE, he here alludes: which last character is known by this very title; and whose sword had actually the qualities which Cervantes ascribes to it.

P. 415.

"Cervantes mentions a horse of wood . . . made by Merlin, for Peter of Provence; with which that valorous knight carried off the fair Magalona. From what romance Cervantes took this I do not recollect."

It is not very surprising that you should forget what you never knew: but, to assist your memory, I will inform you of three things, no one of which I dare believe you are at present in the least acquainted with. 1. The romance alluded to by Cervantes is intitled, "*La Historia de la linda Magalona hija del rey de Napoles y de Pierres de Provença*," printed at Seville, 1533, and 1542, 4to. and is a translation from a much more ancient and very celebrated French romance, under a similar title. 2. The story of the wooden horse, with the pin in its head, is also to be found in another old Spanish romance (likewise from the French) intitled, "*La Historia del cavallero Clamades y de la linda Clarmonda*," printed at Burgos, 1521, in 4to. 3. The original tale is in the Arabian Nights Entertainments (18).

P. 416.

"The story of Patient Grisilde was the invention of Boccacio." Hardyly and boldly asserted.—Blind Bayard never hesitates at a leap. From the circumstance of there being every reason to conclude that Boccaccio was NOT the author of this story, you very rationally conclude he WAS. In the year 1373 (and not 1374) the Decameron fell into the hands of Petrarch, who tells Boccaccio, in a letter, he was so much affected with this tale, that he had translated it into Latin; adding, that it had always pleased him *when he had heard*

(17) P. 1. l. 3. c. 4.

(18) See "The story of the Inchaned Horse," vol. iv. p. 182.

it many years before (19); a sufficient proof that Boccace was not the author. And it would, indeed, appear very strange, if Petrarch had not payed his friend some compliment upon the invention of so interesting a story, if he had not been fully apprised that it was *not* his. Besides, it is well enough known that this is far from being the onely tale in the Decameron, of which Boccace was not the inventor. The fable of Chaucers interview with Petrarch having been justly exploded and given up by every other person, you are now "inclined to think that he (Chaucer) was one of those friends to whom Petrarch used to relate it (*i. e.* the story of Grisilde) at Padua;" and "this," you say, "seems sufficiently pointed out in the words of the prologue;" because the Clerk of Oxford, who tells the story, there says, that HE "lernid it at Padow of *this* worthie clerke." A most convincing and satisfactory circumstance truely! But Petrarch does not inform us that he ever used to relate the story to his friends at Padua, or anywhere else: he onely says, he had shewn his translation of it to one of them: and from this version, which would, most probably, be longer and more circumstantial than Boccacios (and if you think proper, you have it in your power to compare them) there can be little doubt that Chaucer took the story, believing it to be Petrarchs own, and knowing it was not Boccacios.

P. 417.

"There is a curious mixture in CHAUCERS *balade* to king Henry IV. where Alexander, Hector, Julius Cæsar, Judas Maccabeus, David, Joshua, Charlemagne, Godfrey of Bulloign, and king Arthur, are all thrown together as antient heroes. v. 281, seq."

And pray, Sir, under your good favour, where is the great curiosity of placing the NINE WORTHIES in their proper order? Your learning just enabled you to discover, that *les neuf preux* meant *the nine worthies*; it was not sufficient to inform you *who they were*. But now, Mr. Warton, since you are so fond of pointing out curiosities, what do you think of the curiosity of JOHN GOWERS *balade* to Henry IV. being written by CHAUCER?

P. 420.

"Wel *sikerer* was his crowing in his loge,
"Than was a clock, or abbey horologe."

Sikerer, "clearer." Nonsense! *Surer*, more exact.

P. 427.

"A *broche* she bare upon her low collere,
"As brode as is the bosse of a boklere,"

What do you mean by explaining *broche* a JEWEL? A *precious stone* as broad

(19) See Mr. Tyrwhitts Chaucer, iv. 157.

as the boss of a shield! A very common ornament, no doubt.—It was her *breast-buckle*.

P. 429.

"It is remarkable," you say, "that Wickliffe translates, *Luc. i. 21*: [i. 15.] "He schal not drinke wyn ne *fydr*!" Is this last word in any printed or MS. copy of Wickliffes testament; or is it an interpolation of your own? I onely ask, because a very ancient MS. of it, which has been lately consulted for the purpose, reads "*wyne & cyser*," ("*vinum et hceram*;" OXFORD ALE.) And as that seems to be the true word, your quotation of the passage makes nothing to the purpose for which you produce it.

V O L. II.

P. 5.

It would have been a curious, though, I should be apt to imagine, a somewhat difficult argument, to have endeavoured to prove how Gowers mentioning a *great number* of *stones*, "vegetable, mineral, and animal," "abundantly confirms" Dr. Warburtons explication of *Falstaffes* "two *stones*:" which passage, you very modestly tell us, "the rest of the commentators do not seem to have understood;" though, in reality, as "the rest of the commentators" would tell *you*, you do not understand it yourself.

P. 8.

I will here, with your good leave, transcribe a very curious note from the foot of this page.

"I have mentioned a Latin romance of Alexander's life, as printed by Frederick Corfellis, about 1468. *supr. vol. i. p. 131.* [where you tell us it is "without date."] On examination, that impression is said to be finished Decemb. 17, 1468. Unluckily, the seventeenth day of December was a Sunday that year. A manifest proof that the name of Corfellis was forged."

And upon this correction and inevitable conclusion, I shall beg leave to hazard a couple of insignificant remarks. The first is, I much doubt whether there be any such book as you refer to, appearing or pretending to be printed by Corfellis in the above year; because, if there be, and we can onely get rid of your "manifest proof," I think its existence will go a great way to establish not onely the identity of the man, but his residence and practice at Oxford

Oxford in that very early period : a circumstance so much to the credit of Alma Mater, that I am surprised one of her old fostered children should have so readily given it up, on the slight ground of a printers devil finishing a book upon a Sunday !

But are you *certain*, Mr. Warton, that the 17th day of Decem. 1468 *was* a Sunday ? Because I have (and this is my 2d remark) some reason to believe that it was not ; and I'll tell you why :—It was a SATURDAY ; the last day of the week ; the most likely of all others for the finishing of a laborious work : “ a manifest proof that the name of Corfellis was NOT forged.” For, surely, “ the collusion holds good in the exchange.”—The Sunday letter for this part of the year, which was leap year (and I appeal to every one capable of calculating it) was B. Sunday must, therefor, necessarily fall upon the EIGHTEENTH day of the above month ; as any parish-clerk is able to inform you. How prudent, Mr. Warton, you see it is, always to establish your premisses upon a sure foundation, before you venture to draw a conclusion which may, in the end, prove the overthrow of its creator.

P. 42.

— “ men knowè well inowe
“ That combre-world that thou [Death] mȳ mayster slowe.”

(Note a.) “ He calls death the *encumbrance of the world*.” Ridiculous ! It is the MEN who *encumber the world* : fruges consumere nati.

P. 46.

“ He [Whethamstede] expended upwards of one hundred and TWENTY pounds.” Hearne, in the place quoted (20), has “ *ultra summā centū q' q' ginta librar.*” Is that a hundred and TWENTY ?

P. 102.

The extract from Sir Launfal, for which you are obliged to your very accurate and faithful friend and coadjutor, Dr. Thomas Percy (now lord bishop of Dromore) is in the same miserable state of incorrectness as all your other transcripts from MSS. But why should you regard what you do not understand ? I will, 1st, give you an instance that it is incorrect ; and, 2dly, an instance that you do not understand it.

1. Instead of

“ *Le douzty artours dawes,*”

the MS. reads

“ *Be* (i. e. *by*, in) *douzty artours dawes.*”

2. “ *Of a ley* that was yfette.”

Ley you interpret *Liege* ; as if it alluded to Launfals character or situation ; whereas it is simply a *Lay* (or song) that was so called.

I could adduce five hundred such instances, if I chose. I may hereafter take some notice of your absurd whim of ascribing "a set of French romances" to "some Armorican bard;" as well as of the familiar and confident manner in which you affect to speak of the poets of Britany; of whose writings you never saw a line, nor can you tell where there is one to be found; and for whose history you know not where to look.

P. 103.

You *think* you "have seen some evidence to prove that Chestre was author of the Erle of Tholouse." You **THINK** so! and expect, I suppose, that your dreams are to pass upon your readers for fact and history? you never could see any such evidence; you never did see it.

P. 117.

I onely observe, that the *Gal*, which you have here so very ingeniously converted into *Sal*, and thence into *Salisbury*, is foisted in by yourself, without the least authority. This *Chateau du Gast*, or *Gât*, is indeed sayed to be *near* Salisbury, but that is a sufficient proof it was not meant to be the same place. You should have proved that the romance of Lancelot had existed in Latin, before you mentioned it as a translation from that tongue.

P. 125.

"John Major mentions the beginning of some of his [i. e. James I. of Scotlands] other poems, viz. "Yas sen, &c." and "at Beltayn, &c." Both these poems **SEEM** to be written on his wife." And why do they **SEEM** so? Did you ever see them? Can you discover so much from the four words and two *et ceteras* you have printed? or does Major, or any one else who knew them, say aught to favour so idle, and, to my knowlege, false a notion?

P. 126.

"The decisive battle of **SHREWSBURY**, fought against the Scots."

Where, in the name of all that is wonderful and absurd, could you possibly meet with this precious piece of information? In the same authority, no doubt, whence you learned that the **EMPEROR** was *taken prisoner* by the **FRENCH KING**, at the siege of **PAVIA** (21). You must either, Mr. Warton, deal in very strange histories, or else you are very unmindful of what you read, or careless of what you say. And, indeed, I cannot but think, if that good and wholesome discipline, which the name of **MILTON** may probably call to your remembrance, were still in use at Trinity College, the more than childish ignorance of a certain near friend of yours would hardly escape without experiencing its salutary effects.

P. 127.

If you had looked further into John Hardings Chronicle, than merely to

pick out a specimen of his poetical frigidity, you might have found reason to allow, with some truth, "that both his prose and poetry are equally useful;" as his book contains many curious and important historical records, and a relation of numerous interesting facts, in some of which he was a performer; to others an eye-witness, not to be found in any other of our old writers: and, surely, you are not so absurd as to imagine, that the veracity of his narrative is impeached by the flatness of his verse. But, indeed, I am not at all surprised at the disregard you shew for authentic history, after giving us such signal proofs how little you are acquainted with it.

P. 134

"John Scogan is commonly supposed to have been a cotemporary of Chaucer, but this is a mistake. He was educated at Oriel college in Oxford; and being an excellent mimic, and of great pleasantry in conversation, became the favourite buffoon of the court of Edward the fourth, in which he passed the greatest part of his life." You could scarcely have given the gentleman a more particular description, if you had enjoyed the pleasure of a *tête-à-tête* with him. But where is your authority for it? Marry, in "SCOGGINS JESTS;" an admirable source, truly, to draw the history of a mans life from. So may the lives of Foote, Garrick, and Sir John Fielding, be compiled, by some future Warton, from the jest-books extant under their respective names. But let us examine the account: This Scogan, or Scoggin, it seems, was a buffoon in the court of Edward the fourth: how, then, came Falstaff to break his head, "at the court gate, when he was a crack not thus high;" this was in John of Gaunts time, when Jack "was page to Thomas Mowbray, duke of Norfolk (22)." O! this, no doubt, you will say, is Shakespeares own anachronism. Ben Jonson, however, who was as likely to know the fact as you are, expressly tells us that Scogan was

— a fine gentleman, and a master of arts
Of HENRY THE FOURTHS times, that made disguises.
For the kings sons, and writ in ballad royal
Daintily well (23):

And this seems to be true; for we have a *moral balade royal* from "Scogan, unto the lordes and gentlemen of the kynges house," and which must, as you observe, have been written before the year 1447 (meaning, I suppose, 1412) in his old age, and printed, as you yourself tell us, by Caxton, who was, doubtless, sufficiently acquainted with his identity and character; and there is, likewise, another from Chaucer to him. So that, notwithstanding any doubt or uncer-

(22) 2d pt. of Hen. IV. a. iii. sc. 1.

(23) *Fortunate Isles*, vol. vi. p. 292. Consult also Tyrwhitts Chaucer, V. xv. xix.

tainty you may have upon the authenticity of these two poems (24), every person else must be convinced that the Scogan, by and to whom they were respectively written, could not possibly be a *buffoon* in the court of *Edward IV.* This was a difficulty you could not reconcile to your hypothesis: you were, therefor, resolved to deny, or, at least, to doubt, the evidence that made for the opposite side of the question, and to cut the knot which you could not untie. For a little enquiry or attention must have informed you, that the true name of the poet Scogan was HENRY, and not JOHN. This Mr. Tyrwhitt has clearly shewn, and thence (perhaps rather too hastily) inferred that the story of Scogan the jester was an absurd and improbable fiction; nay, he has even (contrary to his usual candour) gone so far as to call the jest-book, of which you have so exalted an opinion, "a collection of *foolish* stories." The merits of the work I shall leave to be settled between yourselves; but this really learned and ingenious gentleman will not, I trust, take it amiss, if I shall venture to assert, that there *actually was* such a person as JOHN SCOGAN; a totally distinct character from Henry, the poet; and who, though no "jocular bard," (unless you will allow the extract in the note sufficient to authorise the title) must, in my mind, have been "a fellow of infinite jest, of most excellent fancy." I do not, in forming this opinion, rely altogether upon your friend Dr. Andrew Borde; though it will appear, that the account given by him is not entirely void of probability (25); neither do I lay much stress on what Shallow says in 2 Hen. IV.—"Bale, inaccurately," you say (but why, inaccurately? he certainly knew more about the fellow than you can do) "calls Scogan, the JOCLATOR of Edward the fourth;"—the kings JESTER: there is no inaccuracy in the phrase, and you admit the fact. But I shall produce still better and more unexceptionable authority: and, first, we will see what master Raphael Holinshed says of him (speaking of the great men of Edward the fourths time). "Skogan, a learned gentleman, and student for a time in Oxforde, of a pleasaunte witte, and bent to mery deuises, in respect whereof he was called

(24) If the above MORAL BALADE be "the dullest sermon that ever was written," and if it, and other things equally dull, be the whole of Scogans poetical remains, whence arises your authority for giving him the very familiar appellation of "our JOCLAR BARD?" since, by your own account, his *jest*s and his *poetry* had not the remotest connection. It is not unlikely, however, (to allow you all possible justice) that, in thus summing up his character in two words, you had your eye upon the following ingenious composition, which he wrote at Oxford, on taking his degree of A. M. and wherein *both* his talents are united.

"A Master of Art is not worth a fart,

"Except he be in schools;

"A Batchelour of Law is not worth a straw,

"Except he be among fools."

(25) This writer informs us, he had "heard say, that Scogin did come of an honest stock, no kindred, and that his friends did set him to schoole at Oxford, where he did continue till he was made master of art." He appears, from the book, to have been dead before Henry the seventh's time. He is there frequently called TOM, by Sir William Nevyle, and is introduced to court as his fool: possibly, however, this might have been the common appellation of such characters: we still say TOM FOOL. SCOGGINS JESTS, n. d. 4to. b. l.

into the courte, where giuing himselfe to his naturall inclination of mirthe and pleasaunt pastime, he plaied many sporting parts, althoughe not in suche vnciuill maner as hath bene of hym reported (26)." Secondly, here is his EPITAPH, transcribed from an authentic MS. in the British Museum (27), an evidence which must be decisive as to his existence, character, and christian name :

*Hic iacet in tumulo corpus SCOGAN ecce JOHANNIS
Sic tibi pro speculo letus fuit eius in annis
Leti transibunt transitus vitare nequibunt
Quo nescim⁹ ibunt vinoſi cito Libunt.*

This MS. appears to have been written towards the latter part of Edward the fourth's time; so that you are peculiarly happy in your conjecture, that Scogan "FLOURISHED about the year 1480 (28)."

P. 138.

"I refer also the NOTBROWNE MAYDE to this period (*i.e.* the reign of Ed. IV.)" That is, because you know no better than Prior did, when he called it *three hundred years old*. It cannot possibly be earlier than Henry the eighth's time. You are equally mistaken about "the delectable history of king Edward the fourth and the tanner of Tamworth," which (as we have it now) is certainly not older than the latter part of queen Elizabeth's reign. By a parity of reasoning, I suppose, if it had been *the delectable history of king HENRY the fourth, or king Edward the FIRST, and the aforesay'd tanner*, you would have carried it fifty or a hundred years still further back. I readily, however, admit,

(26) His. Eng. II. 1355. By "vnciuill" reports, he evidently alludes to Dr. Bordes Story-book; a circumstance of which the reader will have little doubt, on perusing the following *merry jest*, intituled, "How Scogin let a fart, and said it was worth forty pounds."

"That time that Scogin was conversant, both in the kings chamber, and in the queens, Scogin would peak here and there, about in the queens chamber or lodging; the queen by custom (as most commonly all great women and ladies and gentlewomen do) let a fart, saying, The same is worth to me twenty pound. Scogin hearing this, girt out a fart like a horse or mare, saying, if that fart be so dear, of twenty pound, my fart is worth forty pounds." (p. 23.)

The story immediately preceding, "How Scogin played horse-play in the queens chamber," is still more "vnciuill."

The title of the book is, "Scogins Jests: Full of witty mirth, and pleasant shifts; done by him in France, and other places. Being a preservative against melancholy. Gathered by Andrew Board, doctor of physick."

Amongst these ancient and vulgar pleasantries is the (supposedly modern) story of the French quack, and his flea-powder, and Smollets tale of the *three black crows* (here augmented to *twenty-one*). There is likewise the joke of the Oxford scholars proving *two eggs* to be three; and that of the sharpers convincing the fellow that his sheep were hogs: besides many other such-like things, usually met with in more modern books.

(27) MSS. Harl. 1587. It is remarkable for containing the name of Cardinal Pole, written by himself, when a boy at school.

(28) I could never conceive, Mr. Warton, to what Drayton alludes, in the preface to his Eclogues, where he says, that "the Colin Clout of SCOGAN, under Henry the seventh, is pretty." He is speaking of pastoral poetry; and adds, that "Barklays ship of fools hath twenty wiser in it." You somewhere say, "he must mean SKELTON;" but what PASTORAL did he write?
that

that the poem has been much modernised, and that the original (of which, I am certain, you never before heard) is probably as old as the time you mention, having seen and transcribed an ancient MS. copy, which appeared to have been written in or about the reign of Henry the seventh, intituled, "THE KYNG AND THE BARKER (29)."

P. 153.

Though I very willingly agree with you in determining the poems of Rowley to be modern ill-contrived forgeries, yet I must beg leave to think, that neither "MS. Wantn." nor any other, gives you the least authority for saying, that "SIR CHARLES BALDWIN was executed at Bristol in the presence of Edward the fourth, in the year 1463." This name and circumstance (if not from Chattertons poem) are entirely of your own invention. And how is it possible that ROWLEYS MEMOIRS should be composed in 1460, when he speaks of king Edward IV. as the reigning prince, who did not attain the crown till the following year; and expressly mentions his Bristow tragedy: the relation of an event which, according to your own account, did not happen before 1463 (or, as you afterwards correct yourself, 1462 or 1461)?

P. 166.

"The reader will observe, that whether there are eight or SEVEN lines, I have called it the OCTAVE stanza." I see you have; and should, from this curious remark, be rather apt, if it were not for better intelligence, to assign your *birth, parentage, and education*, to a country more remarkable for such like observations than our own. You are, I imagine, so far acquainted with mathematics, as to know that SEVEN is NOT EIGHT, any more than 4, 6, 9, or 10: for you likewise call Spensers the OCTAVE stanza; by the same licence, I suppose, as you elsewhere tell us that a poem, containing six lines in each verse, was "printed in FIVE-LINED STANZAS (30)."

P. 177.

"He [*sci.* Richard I.] regnyd almost two yere."

Be so good as to look at your original, and see whether it be not, as it should be, TEN yere, instead of two.

P. 179.

Having displayed your ingenious conjectures, that Ranulph Higden, the chronicler, was author of the Chester Whitsun Plays, you tell us, that "in *Piers Plowman*, a FRIER says, that he is *well acquainted with the rimes of Randall of Chester*;" and add, "I take this passage to allude to THIS VERY PER-

(29) *i. e.* of "Dantre," or Daventry, and not Tamworth.

(30) Vol. ii. p. 81.

son, and to his *compositions of this kind*, for which he was probably soon famous." Very well; every thing, you suppose, is so far smooth and safe. And now, Mr. Warton, let me observe two things to you: 1st. The fellow, in *Piers Plowman*, to whom you mean to refer, is NOT a FRIER, but an idle, drunken, SECULAR PRIEST. 2dly. He does NOT say, that he is well acquainted with THE "rimes of Randall of Chester;" he onely tells us, that he

"CAN rimes of Roben Hode and Randal of Chester."

S. e. that he could SING OR REPEAT rimes or songs (NOT MADE BY, but) OF AND CONCERNING Robin Hood and Randal of Chester;—not Randal Hygden, but Randal Blundeville, EARL OF CHESTER, a crusader and celebrated hero, greatly in favour with the common people, and contemporary with Robin Hood. You begin now to perceive what a ridiculous figure your conclusion cuts, and into what a miserable dilemma you have got: for, unless you will allow that YOUR *frier* could spout plays written by Robin Hood, you cannot be permitted to say, that he alludes to the Whitsun Mummeries of Randal Hygden, how famous soever you may suppose him to have been on that account.

P. 187.

"Whiche be omytted, now *not put in ure*."

That is, as you explain it "not mentioned here:" Flat nonsense! the meaning is, *not now put in use*, not used at present.

P. 192.

"INFORTUNIO." You had best be sure whether Spenser ever assumed this appellation. In the mean time I will inform you, that the author of this poem, on the miseries of Edward II. was RALPH STARKEY the antiquary.

P. 199.

"The DEADMAN'S SONG . . . is worthy of Doctor Percy's excellent collection." I really believe, Mr. Warton, that you are the onely person in the world that could think, or would say so. It is a most wretched performance, altogether unworthy of republication: and for the justice of this character, I appeal to the Doctor himself; of whose taste in poetry (that is, where he understands it) I have the highest opinion; and who may, indeed, easily make it deserving of a place in his "excellent collection," if he will but take the same pains with it, which he has taken with most of the other old pieces so faithfully reprinted in that celebrated work. It has done HIS business, however, and that's enough.

P. 219.

P. 219.

"As Tully supposes SCIPIO to have shewn the other world to his ANCESTOR AFRICANUS."

So, in vol. iii. p. 236. "In imitation of Tully, who, in the *Somnium Scipionis*, supposes SCIPIO to have shewn the other world to his ANCESTOR AFRICANUS."

Is THIS a *proof*, that you, Mr. Warton, have ever read the *Somnium Scipionis*? or, a proof that you have been in a *dream* yourself? Is it possible, think you, for such an absurdity to have proceeded from any other person?

P. 230.

"The HISTORY OF THE SEVEN CHAMPIONS, a book compiled in the reign of JAMES THE FIRST, by one Richard Johnson, and containing some of the capital fictions of the old Arabian romance." It is somewhat extraordinary, if this work were written no sooner, that the AUTHOR of the OBSERVATIONS ON SPENSERS FAIRY QUEEN should have represented it as one of those "miraculous books" which were so highly fashionable in the reign of queen Elizabeth, and even as having been of great assistance to Spenser in the formation of that poem. But I well know who corrected him; and I likewise believe that *the correcter* knew very little more of the matter than *the corrected*. The fact is, that both the author of the Observations and the author of the History of English Poetry is wrong. For, 1st. The History of the Seven Champions was not written so early as the Fairy Queen: and, 2dly. It was not "compiled in the reign of James the first." The first position is not, indeed, quite so easy to prove, nor, as you yourself here suppose the contrary, do I much care whether it be true or not: but the other is certain, "The Seven Champions of Christendom" being quoted, as a popular book, by Meres, in his WITS TREASURY, printed in 1598. With respect to its containing any fiction of Arabian romance, you should, I think, first adduce some such romance, containing similar fictions with the Seven Champions, which is a mere olio from Guy, Bevis, and other old English romances and story-books.

P. 231.

"The cristen mon *bedde ferly*

"What hit mihte mene."

"Was very attentive. *Heeded*."

Though I have, here and there, hastily picked up a good large bavin of your pretended explanations of ancient words, as they lay in my way, I certainly have not made it a point to be very attentive to them. Your blunders are beyond computation, "out of all ceſs;" and I have neither the leisure nor the patience to detect you in every one. But your ignorance is so amazing and unaccountable, in many of them, that I cannot chooſe but beſtow more attention upon them than I otherwiſe would do. For inſtance, how could you contrive to miſinterpret, and corrupt the above ſimple phraſe "*bedde ferly*," as you have done? The loweſt perſon in Trinity college, the porter, nay your old bed-maker, had you

you asked them the question, would have immediately informed you its meaning was purely this: *The christian man had ferly* (i. e. *wonder*), what it might mean.

Ibid.

"Clere ipavet with *gete*."

"Paved with *gritt*, i. e. sand, or gravel."

O monstrous! Did you never hear of such a thing as *Yet*?

P. 234.

"Hector, Joshua, Judas Maccabeus, king David, Alexander the Great, Julius Cesar, Arthur, Charlemagne, and Godfrey of Bulloign."

"THESE are the NINE WORTHIES [O, you have found them out at last!] to whom Shakespeare alludes in *Loves Lab. Lost*. "Here is like to be a good presence of WORTHIES: he presents Hector of Troy; the Swain, POMPEY THE GREAT; the Parish-curate, Alexander; Armado's Page, HERCULES; the Pedant, Judas Macchabeus, &c." Act v. Sc. i."

Are POMPEY and HERCULES, Mr. Warton, two of those NINE WORTHIES you have just enumerated?

P. 277.

"The Scottish Saxons."—Some of your North-British readers will no doubt be glad to see your authority for converting all their Lowland countrymen into SAXONS.

P. 281.

"I believe the editors name (i. e. the name of the editor of Bp. Douglasses Virgil, in 1710) was ROBERT FREEBAIRN, a Scotchman." A most astonishing declaration!—I mean from the unparalleled ignorance of its maker. The editor of this book being well known, by every one any way conversant in, or inquisitive after, such matters, to have been Mr. THOMAS RUDDIMAN, a learned and ingenious critic, and most worthy, amiable, and modest man. The reader will smile to find ROBERT FREEBAIRN—one of his printers.

P. 284 (note n.) 285 (note f.) 286 (note k.)

Pray, Mr. Warton, will you do me the favour to inform me how you came by these notes?—Few people can write better language than yourself; what necessity, therefor, could induce you to pilfer from a dead man? I say, PILFER; for each of THESE NOTES, as you well know, is STOLEN VERBATIM from the late Mr. Fawkeses Imitation of Douglas.

P. 296.

P. 296.

What authority can you possibly have to pronounce the word *gyir* a maske or masquerade? Most ridiculous! "The *reid Etin* and the *gyir catling* [carling]," are two of the "plesand histories" discryved by this worthy knight (31): The last edition of whose works you "believe" to be "at Edinburgh, 1709. 12mo." There have been, at least, half a score impressions since.

P. 312.

And does the author of "Grysilde" really say that Prince HENRY was Queen Catherine's FIRST husband; and on account of her tender years never slept with her? We must have your History of England next!

P. 328.

"The kirk-kow," of which you know not what to make, is, the MORTUARY.

P. 329.

"Oppressioun the persone I leif untill
 "Pouir mens corne to halde upon the *rig*
 "Quhill he get the teynd alhail at his will.

"To keep the corn of the poor in the *rig* or RICK."

Now why will you be so absurd as to be thus continually busying yourself with passages which you do not understand, and which nobody could want you to explain if you did? Your attempts are as impertinent as they are unsuccessful. The *rig* is the RIDGE of the open field, where the parson is so oppressive as to detain the whole of the poor peoples corn till he thinks fit to draw his *tithe*.

P. 356.

"About the year 1512, MARTIN COCCAIE of Mantua, whose true name was THEOPHILO FOLENGIO, a Benedictine monk of Casino in Italy, wrote a . . . burlesque Latin poem, in heroic metre, checquered with ITALIAN and TUSCAN words." This is, surely, the most curious passage that was ever yet found in a history! Any other person than yourself would have naturally supposed that a non-existent character could not have written a book; and, if he had sayed any thing, would have told his readers that such a one, under such an assumed name, did so and so. But it seems to be your chief study (if you study at all) to court absurdity, rather than to avoid it: Here being no less than three choice blunders in little more than so many lines. For, in the first place, the assumed name of the above writer was not MARTIN, but MERLIN, Coccaie. 2dly. His true one was not *Theophilo FOLENGIO*, but

(31) Sir David Lindsay.

Teofilo FOLENGO. And 3dly. The most illiterate person must know that the *Italian* and *Tuscan* is either one and the same language, or, at least, that *Tuscan* words must necessarily be *Italian* ones. But, I ask your pardon, you do not, perhaps, know that Tuscany is in Italy: Ignorant you certainly are, that the dialect made use of in the above poem is the *Mantuan*; which would be almost as difficult to a native of Florence, as to a native of Madrid. You have well observed that you went out of your way to mention such obscure versifiers as Folengus and Arena; for you neither prove that Skelton copied their manner (indeed, it would have been surprising if he had, as he wrote before either), nor that *their* singular mode of versification was known in England, nor *his* in France or Italy. Indeed you evidently do not know what Macaronic poetry is. The POLEMO-MIDDINIA is undoubtedly the first regular imitation of Folengo, I mean the first Macaronic poem, by a native of Great Britain, now known. It is a foolish conceit that Skeltons mode of writing is designed to be ridiculed by Shakspeare in the passage you quote; which is the common jingleing conclusion of several of Caxton and de Wordes prose addresses to their readers.

P. 357.

“COGENIAL.” Let me recommend CONGENIAL to your next edition; you can use words, Mr. Warton, better than you can make them.

P. 360.

If the existence of this before unheard of Morality (32) rest entirely upon the *dictum* of the author of the History of English Poetry, I had rather, if you please, withhold my belief till its production.

P. 380.

“Hamlet seems to be quoting an old play, at least an old song, on Jephthah's story.” You did not then know, it seems, that this very song was printed by your “learned friend and fellow-labourer” the lord bishop of Drogheda? No more than he did, when giving it as communicated to him by Mr. Steevens from the mouth of a lady, that it was extant in an old black-letter copy in —; but the collection might suffer by the discovery (33), which I will not, therefor, make (34).

(32) The Nigramansir, by Skelton. What says Mr. Steevens to this discovery? What, Mr. Malone?

(33) And it would not be the first, if it did:—Dulwich-college, to wit.

(34) It is somewhat more extraordinary that the same right reverend and ingenious prelate and ballad-maker should not have known, when he printed the song which he has intitled “*Jealousy tyrant of the Mind*” “from a MANUSCRIPT COPY communicated to the editor,” that it was written by Mr. Dryden, and already extant in every edition of his tragi-comedy of LOVE TRIUMPHANT.

P. 405.

"Morte Arthur . . . then recently published." This very expression I noticed before; but as there were, on that occasion, only some 20 or 30 years in dispute between us, I did not think it worth my while to interrupt you: I will now, however, beg leave to ask you, what you mean: Whether that this romance was "recently published" in *Shallows*, or *Shakespeares* time? In the reign of Henry the fourth, or of queen Elizabeth? You must necessarily mean either the one or the other; and you will be above a hundred years wrong, before or behind hand, mean which you will. But I give you this to digest at leisure.

P. 411.

"Leo, while he was pouring the thunder of his anathemas against the heretical doctrines of Martin Luther, published a BULLE OF EXCOMMUNICATION against all those who should dare to censure the poems of Ariosto."

Everybody would, I believe, be glad to learn where you picked up this curious piece of *secret* history? Some authority you had for it, no doubt, though I much suspect you were ashamed to mention it. The anecdote reads pretty enough, to be sure; what a pity, now, if it should happen not to be true. Paulus Jovius, I dare say, among the many strange things he relates, does not tell you this; which, I am apt to imagine, you have caught (at second-hand) from M. de Voltaire. Ah, master Warton, master Warton, I am afayed he will prove a poor support to you! Good jests make onely bad history. But now, what will the world think of you,—nay, what will you think of yourself,—(though I confess you have a great many literary sins of much greater consequence to answer for—Ay, and your back is broad enough,—your mind callous enough,—and your face—bold enough, to bear them all, and a thousand or two more) if this famous BULLE should appear to be (as it certainly is) no more than a common licence to Ariosto, or his bookseller, to print and publish the *Furioso* within the papal dominions for a certain number of years, prohibiting every other person from printing or publishing it within that term? This discovery will, I doubt, M. Warton, go near to turn *your* BULL into a CALF.

EMENDATIONS AND ADDITIONS. Vol. I. P. 190.

"The French prose romance of *Robert le Diable*, printed in 1496, is extant in the LITTLE COLLECTION, OF TWO VOLUMES, CALLED BIBLIOTHEQUE BLEUE."

And pray, Mr. Warton, when and where might this same pretty little collection be printed, or where can one possibly meet with it? For I sincerely believe it was never heard of before.—What astonishing ignorance! This same "*little* collection" consists of no less than fifty or a hundred story books in 4to. and 8vo. generally printed at Troyes, and which, like our penny histories, are published, always singly, in a small type, upon coarse paper, and at low prices, chiefly for the amusement of the common people in France; and have

been quaintly denominated *la Bibliotheque bleue* (35) from their being usually covered with *blue paper*.

"There is an old English MORALITY on this tale (*i. e.* Robert the Devil), under the very corrupt title of ROBERT CICYLL, which was represented at the High-cross in Chester, in 1529. There is a manuscript copy of the poem, on vellum, in Trinity college library at Oxford, MSS. Num. LVII. fol." As to the representation of this supposed Morality, we must entirely rely upon what you are pleased to say: And as the MS. is in your own college (though I do not perfectly know what you mean) it would be extremely uncandid, and even absurd, to suppose that you had not looked into it. But whether you have or not is of very little consequence, as I will take upon myself to say, that if ROBERT CICYLL be its title it has no more connection with, nor bears any more resemblance to, the story of Robert the Devil, than it has with, or bears to, that of Jack the Giant-killer, or Tom Thumb. And I appeal to—YOURSELF—when you have compared them.

P. 197, to l. 15.

"Sire Jovyn."—Your learned note on these two words might have been well spared. *Sire Jovyn* is just the same as *Sir Jove*.

ADDITIONS AND EMENDATIONS. Vol. II.

Sign. h. note f.

"LE BONE FLORENCE OF ROME" has not the remotest allusion to the story of Florent. Florence is a lady; the emperors daughter.

Sign. h. 3. 6.

"So our king Richard the first, in a fragment of one of his Provencial sonnets." The line you have quoted is neither written by RICHARD I. nor is it in the FRAGMENT of a sonnet: The piece to which it belongs is an entire song, composed by the emperor Frederick Barbarossa.

Sign. i. 3.

"Turgot died in 1015." This is most extraordinary. You have elsewhere (36) sayed, and (what is not very usual with you) sayed truly, that he "died bishop of Saint Andrews, in 1115." The first date might therefor have passed for an error of the press, had you not, unfortunately, made it the foundation of an argument against the authenticity of one of Rowleys poems; a purpose for which the true date would not have served. You have, Mr. Warton, in the course of this idle controversy acquitted yourself with uncom-

(35) Fresnoy calls them so, *Bibliotheque de Romans*; a book which it is very likely you have confounded with the publications he alludes to.

(36) ii. 148.

mon adroitness, and gained every advantage you could wish for over your numerous adversaries. And, while you thus artfully fabricate your own facts, how should it be otherwise?

V O L. III.

P. i.

" DISSERTATION ON THE GESTA ROMANORUM." This ingenious contrivance takes up 97 pages. A pretty reasonable assistant! Was it inserted for any other purpose? Has it any particular connection with the history of English poetry in the 16th century? O, no; but it serves to fill up the volume, and that's enough. Excellent historian!

P. xii.

" *All the sike* that to him come
" I heled wer swithe sone
" Of fet and eke of honde."

Now, would any one who had read a single line of old poetry, or of any thing else—could any person of common sense conceive it possible that a writer who presumes himself equal to a history of English poetry, should make such nonsense of this simple passage, as to misinterpret "*all the sike*," "ALL THEY SIGHED?" But so it is. We are to consider this, I suppose, as a slight inaccuracy, to which great geniuses are ever most subject: Hang me, though, Mr. Warton, if I do; I say, it proceeds from ignorance, sheer radical ignorance, and nothing else. *All the sick* (says the poet) *that came to him were healed immediately*. You reach the extreme of absurdity if (which I really think is the case) you take the letter *I* for a pronoun.

P. lxxxii.

" When the cloth to ende was wrowght
" To the *Sowdan sone* hit was browzt,
"
" My fadyr was a noble man,
" Of the Sowdan he hyt wan."

" Soldan's son." Your gross and unaccountable stupidity, Mr. Warton, shall for once save you. This is too bad.

P. 13.

"MAIDEN is a corruption of the old French *Magne*, or *Mayne*, great. Thus *Maidenhead* . . . signifies the great PORT . . . So also, *Mayden Bradley* . . . is the great Bradley, &c."

You can put your words together very prettyly, I confess; but it does not thence follow that you should be acquainted with their origin and descent. Points on which even that great luminary, or rather dark-lantern, of literature, Dr. Johnson, is altogether ignorant. What then could be expected from you? The etymology in the quotation is beneath contempt: and could onely have been advanced by a writer equally pert, vain, and injudicious. MAI DUN are two ancient British words, signifying a great hill: Thus *Maiden castle* (Edinburgh) is—not *Castrum Puellarum*, but—a castle upon a high hill. *Bradley* (though Saxon) is, comparatively, a modern adjunct. (See BAXTERS Glossary, 109.163). That *Maidenhead* was originally a great PORT, is a discovery which has been entirely reserved to crown your peculiar sagacity and skill: and great is your merit with the topographer, the antiquary, and the linguist.

P. 31.

"Our author (Wyatt) has more imitations and even translations from the Italian poets than Surrey. Petrarch has described the perplexities of a lover's mind, &c."

Pace non trovo, e non ho da far guerra, &c.

"Wyatt has thus copied this sonnet of epigrams.

I finde no peace, &c."

I had puzzled myself for a long time to find out how you could possibly become acquainted with the circumstances of Wyatts obligation to Petrarch. For I can never believe that you ever read the Italian poet. I have, indeed, sometimes thought that the truly learned Mr. Tyrwhitt might have furnished you with this piece of information: But, if you had received many such favours from him, your book would have cut a very different figure from what it does; and I should have been deprived of the honour of addressing you upon the subject. At other times I have doubted whether you were not indebted to your illustrious friend the bishop of Dromore: But alas! I know not that his lordship is much better acquainted with Petrarch than yourself. I might, indeed, have remained in perpetual ignorance, if I had not accidentally cast my eye upon the 15th page of the 10th volume of the last edition of Shakspeare; where I find the ingenious Dr. Farmer quoting this very sonnet, and referring to Wyatts translation with all the particularities you could have desired. But still I am at a loss to know how you came to learn that the passage in Petrarchs sonnet, which you have pointed out, "is taken from *Messen Jordi*, a PROVENCIAL poet of VALENCIA." Sure I am that you can know nothing of the Valencian poets: And therefor, though I am pretty well satisfied that no such person as MESSEN JORDI ever existed, I shall not accuse you of inventing the name and circumstance alluded to; indeed I strongly suspect whence you drew them, tho' I have it not at present in my power to satisfy myself. Be that as it may, to call him "a PROVENCIAL poet of VALENCIA"

is

is one of those Irish-English bulls for which you alone must be answerable. A FRENCH poet of SPAIN, or a SPANISH poet of FRANCE! Why would you, my dear sir, trust yourself so far from home; in a strange country, too; and (which is worst of all) where anybody had been before, or could come after, you?

P. 35.

"In *lusty leas* at liberty I walke."

"In large fields, over fruitful grounds." Contemptible! In *pleasant meads*.

P. 44.

Are you sure, Mr. Warton, that George Gascoyne was the author of the *Panegyric on the English Poets*? (Compare ii. 130. n. i.)

P. 64.

"What star doth let the hurtful *fire* to rage."

Sire you interpret, SATURN. A sort of small mistake, into which ignorant people will sometimes unavoidably stumble: What think you of SIRIUS, *the dog-star*?

P. 67.

"The Tragedy of GORDOBUCKE (37), written in 1561." You seem to be so perfectly acquainted with the *title* of this play, that one cannot doubt your having seen it.

P. 102.

"To some part of the reign of Henry the eighth I assign the Tournament of Tottenham . . . the substance of its phraseology, which I divest of its obvious innovations, is not altogether obsolete enough for a higher period. I am aware, that in a manuscript of the British Museum it is referred to the time of Henry the sixth. But that manuscript affords no positive indication of that date."

Such a shuffleing, nonsensical paragraph was, I firmly believe, never put together since the invention of letters. That which I do not, and which, I think, no one can, understand, I shall not meddle with. Here is an authentic MS. which not onely Mr. Tyrwhitt (and when I mention him I suppose I need not care if there be a hundred of a different opinion) but every other person who has seen it, is satisfied and convinced could not have been written later than the reign of Henry the sixth. Now you, Mr. Warton, who, to be sure, must be an incomparable judge of what you never saw, pronounce it near a century more modern, because, forsooth, it only *refers* the poem to

(37) That this blunder has proceeded from the author and not from the press, appears from its occurring in many other places, indeed wherever the drama is spoken of. See in particular vol. iii. p. 356.

that age (which it certainly does not) and gives no "positive indication" of such a date (which it certainly does). But if the book had been evidently written in Edward the seconds time, the same absurd plea would have served you. There is not one MS. out of a hundred that has any "positive indication" of the particular period in which it has been written; and yet people who are in the practice of inspecting and comparing MSS. of different ages, can assign to each its proper date, nearly as well as if they had found it in the book. But what is all this to you, who know nothing either of ancient writing or of ancient language? For I will venture to say, that the stile of this very composition bespeaks it at least a hundred years older than the *Nut-browne Mayde*, which, not onely without, but against, all authority, you have thrown so far back as the reign of Henry VI. Your recantation proves nothing but your ignorance (38).

P. 103. note (2).

For the purpose of observing that the *stanza* used by *one man* is the same with that used by *another* (a most profound and important remark, and extremely necessary, especially in this place!) there was, surely, no occasion to foist in a poem of sixteen stanzas. O yes, I beg your pardon, but there was:—To lengthen and stuff your work, which, without such ingenious contrivances, such adventitious helps, you could never have been able to spin out to three large quarto volumes before you come to Spensers Fairy Queen: The OBSERVATIONS on which (for I suppose you will of course lug in the whole of your former work; and, indeed, as it is entirely forgotten, and may therefor safely appear as new matter, one cannot disapprove your œconomy) will naturally make the subject of a *fourth*; and thus you will proceed, I suppose, with a volume a year, so long as the credulity of the public will keep you in countenance. I love to speak out, Mr. Warton; I really believe you will not, willingly, close the work so long as you can make a single guinea by it (39). It is, in my opinion, a most extraordinary, and, I hope and believe, unparalleled circumstance, that a man of eminence in the literary

(38) The right revd. the lord bp. of Dromore has, in the third edition of his "Reliques of Ancient English Poetry," (vol. ii. p. 13.) printed the TURNAMENT OF TOTTENHAM from the above MS. This copy I naturally suppose you have not seen; or you must, I think, have perceived the absurdity of mentioning "obvious innovations." His lordship has indeed told us, that the *last stanza* is not in the MS. but in this he is positively mistaken.

(39) I am not unaware that you have informed us of the fourth volume being in the press, which will complete the work; but they who put implicit faith in such assurances can never have seen, or must have entirely forgot, the following advertisement at the end of the second edition of your POEMS (1779), and which was, doubtless, inserted in the news-papers of that year:—"SPEEDILY will be published, by the same Author, the *Third* and *LAST* Volume of the History of English Poetry: In which the Subject will be carried [*brought*, I suppose you mean] down to the Commencement of the PRESENT Century." How well you kept your word will appear by the volume itself, which was not published till near three years after, and in which the subject is not even carried down (as you call it) to the commencement of the LAST.

world

world should, in order to enhance the bulk and price of his writings, hazard his reputation upon, and descend to, or rather be guilty of, such low, such paltry, such dishonourable, and even dishonest artifices, as almost to deserve the name and punishment of a—SWINDLER.

P. 108.

“ For the purpose of ascertaining or illustrating the age of pieces which have been lately, or will be soon produced, I here stop to recall the readers attention to the poetry and language of the last (*sci.* the 15th) century, by exhibiting some extracts from the manuscript romance of YWAIN and GAWAIN, which has some great outlines of Gothic painting, and appears to have been written in the reign of HENRY THE SIXTH. I premise, that *but few circumstances happened, which contributed to the improvement of our language, within THAT and the PRESENT PERIOD.*”

How modest! how ingenuous!—But, indeed, I ought to apologise for this and the other long extracts I have taken the liberty of producing from your celebrated history; however, as the mode has been adopted, rather for the sake of giving you fair play, and doing you SUBSTANTIAL JUSTICE, than with a view to injure the rapid sale of the work, you will, I flatter myself, have no inclination to be displeased at it. But, to return:—And so you really thought it necessary to go back a full hundred years to *new-write* the History of English Poetry during that period. A most systematical historian, doubtless! What would any of Mr. Humes readers have thought of him, if in the middle of Henry the eighths reign he had *stopped to recall their attention* to a new history of the reign of Henry the sixth? What could there possibly be in the state of our language and poetry, at the period you had got to, which could require, could authorise, could justify, or even excuse, your going back a hundred years to begin your story anew? That which you affect “to premise,” with respect to the language having received no improvement between the two periods, is a glaring inconsistency. You wilfully forget, as you wish your readers to do, that there has been a SURREY and a WYATT just mentioned. If any other person had advanced such a groundless and absurd position, you must have taken him for either a fool or a madman. But the truth, Mr. Warton, the truth is, that you knew nothing of this romance when you might properly enough have introduced it, (not in the reign of Henry VI. for that is an age it does not belong to;) you were as entirely ignorant of the existence of such a poet as *Laurence Minot*, before you saw Mr. Tyrwhitts Chaucer (which, by the way, was published soon enough for you to have made a better use of it (40), as you still are of his merit. I know that these communications were made to you after the publication of your second volume; but you were resolved, it seems, to drag them, at all events, neck and heels, into your third; and, I am ready to confess, they well answer the purpose for which you introduced them:—they stuff your book! But,

(40) It appeared three years before the publication of your second volume: in the body of which it is, I believe, never once mentioned.

now, Mr. Warton, suffer me, if you please, to say a few words to you upon the age of this same MS. COTTON GALB. E. ix. which, by the way, I believe you never saw, and yet I can hardly think any other person could have been so grossly deceived as to suppose it of the age of Henry VI. I will venture to assure you (and I do not care a farthing whether you believe me or not) that the writing of this book is as old, at least, as the time of king Richard the second. But I well know that all the world will be convinced of your want of judgement before you yourself suspect it.

P. 109.

"Lions, beres, both bul and bare,
"That rewfully gan *rope* and rare."

Rope you explain by "*ramp*." But it means, to cry aloud, to bellow. Sales by the common cryer in Scotland are at this day said to be "by public *ROUP*."

P. 112.

"Take the bacyn sone *onane*."

Onane, "perhaps, in hand." Decently sayd; but perhaps not. What think you of *ANON*?

P. 113.

"The store windes blew ful lowd,
"So kene cam never *are* of clowd."

Are, "air." You afterwards (p. 117.) make it mean, *ever*. But all's one to you. It is, in both places, *BEFORE*.

P. 115.

"Tharfore, he sayd, You sal *aby*."

Aby, "Abide. Stay." Nonsense! *SUFFER*.

Ibid.

"For *mate* I lay on the grownde."

Mate, "sleep." He lay as if he had been *DEAD*.

P. 117.

"Til he come to that *leyir sty*."

Leyir, "wicked, bad." That the word *lither* has generally some such meaning, I readily confess; it seems here, however, rather to signify, *unlucky, fatal*.

Sty,

sty, "that is the forest. But I do not precisely know the meaning of *sty*." Then how do you know it means the *forest*? Why do you say any thing, when you know nothing? But I cry you mercy; if you had observed that plan, we should never have beheld your matchless history. For the benefit, however, of your next edition, if it live to see one; if not, for the list of blunders to your present volume (which you will modestly entitle, "Emendations and Additions") I shall inform you, that *sty* is PLACE. *Stybe*, Sax. Thus hog-*sty* is a *place* for hogs; and *homestead*, the *place* where the house stands. It likewise, as *place* does, signifies a house. Hence, Steward, *Stypanb*. In your quotation from EMARE it is a different word, from *Sty*, a road or way.—After all, however, there are several lines in this part of the poem evidently and egregiously out of their place: a circumstance which, had you understood what you were printing, and pretend to explain, you could not have failed to perceive.

P. 122.

"Opon a *sawter* all of gulde,
"To say the sal-mas fast sho bigan."

Sawter. "Psaltery, a harp, of gold." Admirable interpreter!—*She directly began to read the soul-mass in a PSALTER finely gilded.*

P. 141.

"It is highly probable, that the metrical romances of RICHARD CUER DE LYON, GUY EARL OF WARWICK, and SYR BEVYS OF SOUTHAMPTON, were modernised in this reign (*sci.* that of Hen. VIII.) from more antient and simple narrations." This ingenious conjecture comes, to be sure, with perfect consistency from one who has already produced large extracts from these very poems, as specimens of the composition of Edward the seconds time. But, ingenious as it is, it contains neither probability nor truth. All the above romances are extant in MSS. above 300 years old; and, one of them, at least, (Sir Bevis) excepting the typographical incorrectness of the old printed copy, differs no otherwise from it than in its orthography, and the slight variations inseparable from repeated transcription. The ancient MS. copy of *Richard Cuer de Lion* is as long, at least, as, if not longer than, the old *editions*: but whether the printed copies agree with the MSS. or not, is a matter of very little consequence to your hypothesis. It is a fact, that some MS. copies are so totally different from each other, as not to have two lines in common; being translations from the French by different hands. This is actually the case with respect to SIR GUY: there are two distinct translations, both very old; one of which is, line for line, the same with the printed copy. But it will not be found that the phraseology or stile is more polished, or the story more amplified or intricate, in the editions, than they are in the MSS. Simplicity, indeed, is a fault, of which few people will have reason to complain in the perusal of an old metrical romance, let its antiquity be what it may. I shall

take the liberty to observe, in passing, that the printed copy of SIR GUY does not begin,

ITHEN the tyme that God was borne,

as you, implicitly following AMES, but, according to your constant practice, concealing the name of your informant, have been pleased to assert (41). Neither is it in *octavo*, but *quarto*.

P. 143.

Although you tell us you have seen a fragment of the book whence "The Carol brynging in the bores head" is taken, yet was I not without very strong suspicions that you were indebted, as well for this same carol, as for the printers colophon—not to the book itself, but—to your honest, industrious, useful, and ungratefully requited, friend and assistant, Thomas Hearne, in his notes and spicilege upon William of Newbury, who had likewise, as it appeared, furnished you with the anecdote from Hollinshed (p. 745). These suspicions were not weakened on finding, by a comparison of you and your authority, that sayed carol and colophon were printed with your usual accuracy. But, upon further reflection, I am half inclined to question the justice of the above suspicions; for it rather seems to me, that you have been, on this occasion, GUILTY OF PRIVATELY STEALING—from YOURSELF. And I'll tell you how. In that very humourous trifle, intituled and called, "A COMPANION TO THE GUIDE, AND A GUIDE TO THE COMPANION," I see that you have inserted the whole of Mr. Hearn's account *verbatim*, and with a circumstance which might, elsewhere, have been more to your honour:—you have given a minute and accurate reference to your real authority. I say *elsewhere*; for it is, in this place, done merely with a view to raise a laugh at the expence of that most worthy and respectable antiquary; whom, I rather think, you have, in the above piece, made somewhat too-many attempts to ridicule; forgetting, perhaps, that though he was less polished in his taste, and less elegant in his diction than some more modern writers, few, if any of them, can boast of such a sacred regard to truth, and of such unimpeached integrity. And whatever his errors are, there is one, in which I wish you had imitated him as successfully as you have done in many others of a less important and commendable nature:—he has never been detected in a wilful falsehood; nor been ever charged with the slightest misrepresentation of the minutest fact.

Left the number and uniformity of these dry expostulations should render them too flat and tedious to yourself, or my other gentle readers, I shall make bold to break the chain, and endeavour to enliven you and them with an old Christmas carol upon bringing up the BOARS HEAD, very different from that printed by Wynken de Worde, and now, for the first time, faithfully published from an ancient MS. in my own possession.

In die natiuitat^e.

Nowell, nowell, nowell, nowell,
Tydyng^e gode y thyngke to telle.

The borys hede that we bryng here,
Betokeneth a pⁿce with owte pere,
Ys born this day to bye v^o dere.

Nowell, &c.

A bore ys a souerayn beste
And acceptab[le] in eu^ey fesse
So mote thys lord be to moste & leste.

Nowell, &c.

This borys hede we bryng w^t song
In worchyp of hym that thus sprang
Of a virgine to redresse all wrong.

Nowell, &c. (42).

P. 149.

"The same BOAR, that is, EDWARD THE THIRD, is introduced by Minot as resisting the Scottish invasion in 1347, at Nevils cross, near Durham.

"Sir David the Bruse

"Was at distance

"When EDWARD THE BALIOLFE

"Rade with his lance."

Baliolfe you tell us means "WARLIKE." How despicably ignorant must you conceive your readers, to dare, for a moment, to suppose that such stuff should pass upon them for knowledge in history, criticism, and ancient language! Does not every child know that EDWARD III. so far from playing the BOAR at Nevils cross, was not even in England when that affair happened? Indeed, Minot expressly mentions his absence in this very poem. Know, to your confusion, that *Edward the baliolfe* is, EDWARD DE BALIOL! who is sayed, and, as it should seem, with truth, to have had a principal command in the English army. Minot means to reproach David (the Scottish king) with cowardice, in keeping out of Baliols way.

P. 161.

"The poetical annals of king *Edward the sixth*, who removed those chains of bigotry which his BROTHER *Henry* had only loosened." King *Henry the eighth* BROTHER to *Edward the sixth*! O by all means, your history of England (43)!

(42) If the gentlemen of QUEENS should deem the above carol more tasty and elegant than that which they use at present, it is heartily at their service; and they may likewise command the original music, the accompaniment of which would alone be sufficient to give this song a decided superiority over the other, and cannot fail to render their *boars-head* dinner a REAL FEAST.

(43) The word *brother* may, however, with you, generally stand for *son*: in another place you mention "Robert duke of Normandy, William the Conqueror's brother." (Dis. II. Sign. b. 4. d.)

P. 206.

"The first *Chanson à Boire*, or Drinking-ballad, of any merit in our language, appeared in the year 1551."—"This song opens the second act of *Gammer Gurtons Needle*, a comedy, written and printed in 1551, and soon afterwards acted at Christ's college in Cambridge." For this date you quote the authority of "*MSS. Oldys*" (and *quere* that): but as to the play being soon afterwards acted at Christ's college, we have onely your own. Both assertions, however, are undoubtedly false. The play was *acted* BEFORE it was *printed*; and it was *not printed* till 1575.

P. 255.

Well, Mr. Warton, you have at length got us dragged though HELL, into which we found ourselves so unexpectedly plunged; and now, perhaps, you will (after I have recovered my fright and breath) give me leave to ask you a single question: To what purpose is all this long dissertation upon *Dante*? What possible connection is there between the *Divina Comedia*, and the History of English Poetry? "Pough, fool! it fills my book up, do'n't it?" Very true, sir, it certainly does so; and, I think, THAT, from you, is such an unanswerable argument for the necessity of this sort of manœuvre, that I rather wonder you have not favoured us with a similar account of every epic or other poem of which you know anything, or know nothing ('tis all the same), from Homer to Milton. Trust me, I admire your modesty, though, doubtless, we shall have more anon. But pray, as you have entertained us with so many Italian quotations, give me leave to ask you, how long it may be since you became master of that language? because I have heard, that, once upon a time, when you were ambitious of displaying your erudition, in the OBSERVATIONS ON SPENSERS FAIRY QUEEN, by an extract from Tasso, (—Tasso in the original!—) you unfortunately laid hold of a *wrong stanza*, which occasioned much mirth among those wicked wits, who are so maliciously disposed as not to suffer a man of genius to enjoy the credit of talents and learning which he does not possess.

P. 273.

"I am not sure that the *translator of Plutarchs Lives* in 1579 is the same (*sci.* as *Sir Thomas North*)." That is, because you never saw the book, nor knew more of it than the common reference, or catalogue title of, *Norths Plutarch*.

P. 279.

"Dr. Ph. King, author of poems in 1657, son of King, bishop of London." And pray, who told you that the name of this author was *Philip*? and who told you that he was not a bishop himself? And who told you (44) that *Vaulx* was earl of OXFORD? or that *Fairfaxes* Christian name was EDMUND?

P. 339.

"Shakespeare was not the first that exhibited this tyrant (45) upon the stage. In 1586, a BALLAD was printed, called "A tragick report of kinge Richarde the iii." This piece of information you have from the Stationers book: but whence do you gather that it was a PLAY? or, if a play, that it had been, or ever was, "exhibited upon the stage?"

P. 396.

"The imperfect work (*ſci.* Phaers Virgil) was at length completed in 1583. The whole was printed at London in 1584." By thus boldly assuming facts, and studiously concealing authorities, you have to answer both for the ignorance of your informers and for your own. The work was perfected and published upwards of ten years before: Shall I transcribe you the title?

"The whole xii Bookes of the *Æneidos* of Virgill. Whereof the first ix. and part of the tenth, were conuerted into English Meeter by Thomas Phaër Esquier, and the residue supplied, and the whole worke together newly set forth, by Thomas Twyne Gentleman. There is added moreouer to this edition, Virgils life out of Donatus, and the Argument before euery booke. ¶ Imprinted at London by Wyllyam How, for Abraham Veale, dwelling in Poules Church-yearde, at the signe of the Lambe. 1573." *4to. b. l.*

Now, Mr. Warton, if your famous history should live to see a second edition, and you think fit to insert the above title,—take my advice:—Print it correctly, or, Let it alone!

P. 399.

"I have seen an old ballad, called GADSHILL by FAIRE . . . In the Registers of the Stationers, among seven *Ballettes* . . . one is entitled "The Robbery at Gadshill," under the year 1558. I know not how far it might contribute to illustrate Shakspeares *Henry the fourth*. The title is promising." It is so—of a robbery. But pray, Mr. Warton, what was the subject of THAT BALLAD, *which* (you say) *you* saw? Its title is just as promising as the others; and, most probably, it is the very same thing.

P. 423.

"The murninge of Edward duke of Buckingham" is not, as you, absurdly enough, suppose, *Sackvilles Legend*, but a real ballad; which is still extant, and has been lately reprinted.

P. 437.

"Marlowes wit and spritelines of conversation had often the unhappy effect of tempting him to sport with sacred subjects; more perhaps from the

preposterous ambition of courting the casual applause of profligate and unprincipled companions, than from any systematic disbelief of religion. His scepticism, whatever it might be, was construed by the prejudiced and peevish puritans into absolute atheism: and they took pains to represent the unfortunate catastrophe of his untimely death, as an immediate judgment from heaven upon his execrable impiety."

A great deal has been said about Marlow, his opinions and exit, from age to age; from Beard to Warton: the oldest writers ("prejudiced and peevish puritans") directly arraigning him of atheism and blasphemy; and those of more modern times (pious and orthodox churchmen) generously labouring to rescue his character; either by boldly denying, or artfully extenuating the crimes alledged against him: but not an *iota* of evidence has been produced on either side. I have a great respect for Marlow as an ingenious poet, but I have a much higher regard for truth and justice; and will therefore take the liberty to produce the strongest (if not the whole) proof that now remains of his diabolical tenets, and debauched morals; and if you, Mr. Warton, still choose to think him innocent of the charge, I shall be very glad to see him thoroughly white-washed in your next edition. The paper is transcribed from an old MS. in the Harleian library, cited in one of your notes (46), and was never before printed.

"A note containyng the opinion of one Christofer Marlye concernynge his Damnable opinions and Judgment of Relygion and Scorene of Gods worde (47).

"That the Indians and many Authors of Antiquitei have assuredly written of aboue .16. thowsande yeeres agone, wher Adam is proued to have leaved wth in .6. thowsand yeers.

"He affirmeth That Moyse was but a Juggler and that one Heriots can doo more then hee.

"That Moyse made the Jewes to travell fortie yeers in the wildernes (w^{ch} iorny migh^t have ben don in Lesse then one yeer) er they came to the promised Lande to the intente that those whoe wer privei to most of his subtiliteis migh^t perish, and so an ever lastinge supersticion remayne in the harts of the people.

"That the firste beginnyng of Religion was only to keep men in awe.

"That it was an easie matter for Moyse beinge brought vp in all the arts of the Egyptians to abvse the Jewes beinge a rvde and grosse people.

"That Christ was a Bastard and his mother dishonest.

(46) N^o 6853.

(47) This (which is the old) title is partly struck out, and altered to the following one, by another, and, as it seems, later hand:

"A Note deliu'ed on whitson eve last of the most horreble blasphemies vtteryd by X^pofer Marly who w^{thin} iij dayes * after came to a foden & fearfull end of his life."

* These *three Days* are, in your reference to the article, transformed into *so many Atheists*, whom you are pleased to dispatch along with Marlow.

"That

" That he was the sonne of a carpenter and that yf the Jewes amonge whome he was borne did crvcifye him, thei best knew him and whence he came.

" That Christ deserved better to dye then Barabas, and that the Jewes made a good choyce, though Burrabas were both a theife and a murtherer.

" That yf ther be any God or good Religion, then it is in the papists because the service of god is pformed wth more ceremonyes, as elevacōn of the masse, Organs, singinge men shaven crownes, &c. That all protestants ar hipocritall asles.

" That, yf he wer put to write a new religion, he wolde vndertake both a more excellent, and more admirable method and that all the new tēstament is filthely written.

" That the Women of Samaria wer whores and that Christ knew them dishonestlye.

" That S^t John the Evangelist was bedfellow to Christe that he Leaned alwayes in his bosome, that he used him as the synners of Sodome.

" That all thei that Love not tobacco and boyes ar fooles.

" That all the Appostels wer fishermen and base fellowes, nether of witt nor worth, that Pawle only had witt, that he was a timorous fellow in biddinge men to be subiect to magistrates against his conscience.

" That he had as good right to Coyne as the Queen of England, and that he was acquainted wth one poole a prisoner in Newgate whoe hath great skill in mixture of mettalls, and havinge Learned some things of him he ment through help of a cvnnyng stamp maker to coyne french crownes, pistoletts and englishe Shillings.

" That, yf Christ had instituted the Sacraments wth more ceremonyall reverence, it wold have ben had in more admiracōn, that it wolde have ben much better beinge administred in a Tobacco pype.

" That the Angell Gabriell was Bawde to the holy Ghoste because he brough^t the Salutacōn to marie.

" He is sayd for (48)." That one Richard Cholmelei hath confessed that he was pswaded by Marloes reason to become an athieste.

" Theis things wth many other shall by good and honest men be proved to be his opinions and comon speeches, and that this marloe cometh, pswadeth men to Athiesme, willinge them not to be afrayed of bugbeares and Hobgoblins, and vtterly Scornynge both God and his ministers as J Richard Bome will Justify both by my othe and the testimony of many honest men, and almost all men wth whome he hath conversed any tyme will testefy the same And as J thincke all men in christiantei ought to endeavor that the mouth of so dangerous a member may be stopped.

" He sayeth moreou^r that he hath coated a number of contrarieties out of the scriptures, w^{ch} he hath geeven to some great men whoe in conve-

(48) These words are inserted in the margin by a different hand. They, perhaps, mean, that he (i. e. Cholmelei) had been sent after.

nient tyme shalbe named. when theis things shalbe called in question, the witnesses shalbe ~~P~~duced (49)."

"Rychard Bame."

From the above curious Confession of Faith it appears, I doubt, but too plain, that these "prejudiced peevish puritans" had sufficient authority to assert, that Marlow "denied God, and his sonne Christ, and not onely in word blasphemed the Trinity, but also (as 'was' credibly reported) wrote bookes against it, affirming our Sauour to be but a deceiuer, and Moses to be but a coniurer and seducer of the people, and the holy Bible to bee but vaine and idle stories, and all religion but a deuce of policie (50)."

P. 437.

"An affray ensued (*sci.* between Marlow and a servingman, his rival); in which the antagonist, having by superior agility gained an opportunity of strongly grasping Marlow's wrist, plunged his dagger with his own hand into his own BOSOM."

Your propensity to corruption and falsehood seems so natural, that I have been sometimes tempted to believe, you often substitute a lye in the place of a fact without knowing it. How else you came to tell us that Marlow was stabbed in the BOSOM I cannot conceive. It could not, surely, be for the *smoothness of the paragraph*? All former writers, and Wood, amongst the rest, whom you expressly quote, and (which does not always follow) by a slight peculiarity in your expression, I think you must have consulted, say it was in his HEAD.

P. 438.

"IGNOTO, *Raleighs* CONSTANT SIGNATURE." Always confident, and always wrong! The publisher of *Englands Helicon* never conceals the names of his writers where he knows them; where he does not, he subscribes the word IGNOTO (*Anonymous*). And this is so frequently the case, that a great number of the poems which he has so distinguished have been since referred to their true authors: Some to Shakspeare; others to Spenser; but not one of them, if we except the reply to Marlow, has been ever supposed to be Raleighs: To whom if you had not been generously pleased to give the *Imitation* you mention, it might have remained in want of an owner till doomsday. Of this discovery, therefor, your profound sagacity may safely claim the sole credit.

P. 448.

"As a *poetical* novel of Greece, it will not be improper to mention here, the *Clitophon and Leucippe* of Achilles Tatius." Pray, what do you mean by

(49) The passages marked by dots are, in the original, struck through with a pen, by the alterer of the title.

(50) Beards Theatre of Gods Judgements, (1631. 4to.) p. 149. "Of Epicures and Atheists."

calling

calling this a POETICAL novel? Both the original and the translation (neither of which, it is probable, you have ever seen, or know any thing about) are in downright *prose*.

P. 470.

"He [Boccace] was *soon imitated* . . . by many of his countrymen, Poggio, Bandello, the *anonymous author* of LE CIENTO NOVELLE ANTIKE, Cinthio, Firenzuola, Malespini, and others." Not to enquire how an author can be "*soon imitated*" by those who are not born till near a couple of centuries after him, I would be glad to know where you, Mr. Warton, discovered that Boccace was "*imitated*" by the compiler of the *Novelle Antike* (whom you have, doubtless, sufficient authority for placing *after* Bandello), as I am given to understand that the Italian literati universally believe, not only that he was, at least, contemporary with Boccace, but also that his tales are of much higher antiquity; indeed, the earliest compositions of this sort the Italians have.

P. 475.

"In Shakespeare's *Much ado about nothing*, Beatrice *suspects she shall be told* she had "her good wit out of the *Hundred merry tales*." This is just as accurate as every other extract or allusion is throughout the work. She does NOT *suspect* that she SHALL BE *told so*, for Benedick has ALREADY whispered her that some one *had actually* said so of her. I was rather surprised that you had not taken more particular notice of the passage, when I found that, according to your usual and laudable custom, you had been pecking and pilfering from Mr. Steevens's note upon it: whence, I see, you got your *report* that the *Cent nouvelles nouvelles* were written by some of the royal family of France: But I am afraid that the ingenious commentator confounded this work with a quite different one,—the Queen of Navarres Tales.

P. 476.

"Among Mr. Oldys's books was the "*Life of Sir Méliado a Brittish knight*," translated from the Italian, in 1572. By the way, we are not here to suppose that BRITISH means ENGLISH. A BRITISH knight means a knight of BRETAGNE or BRITANNY, in France. This is a common mistake, arising from an equivocation which has converted many a French knight into an Englishman. The learned Nicholas Antonio, in his SPANISH LIBRARY, affords a remarkable example of this confusion, and a proof of its frequency, where he is speaking of the Spanish translation of the romance of TIRANTE THE WHITE, in 1480. "Ad fabularum artificem stylum convertimus, Joannem Martorell Valentiae regni civem, cujus est liber hujus commatis, TIRANT LE BLANCH inscriptus, atque anno 1480, ut aiunt, Valentiae in folio editus. "More hic aliorum talium otiosorum consuetudo, fingit se hunc librum ex ANGLICA in Lusitanam, deinde Lusitana in Valentinam linguam, anno, 1460, trans-

"tulisse, &c." That is, "I now turn to a writer of fabulous adventures, John Martorell of the kingdom of Valencia, who wrote a book of this cast, entitled *TIRANTE the WHITE*, printed in folio at Valencia (51) in 1480. This writer, according to a practice common to such idle historians, pretends he translated this book from English into Portuguese, and from thence into the Valencian language." The hero is a *gentleman* of BRETAGNE, and the book was FIRST WRITTEN IN THE LANGUAGE OF THAT COUNTRY. I take this opportunity of observing, that *these mistakes* of ENGLAND for BRITANNY, *tend to confirm MY HYPOTHESIS*, that Bretagne, or Armorica, was antiently a copious source of romance: an hypothesis, which I have the happiness to find was the opinion of the most learned and ingenious M. La Croze, &c."—(p. 477.) "OUR KING ARTHUR was sometimes called ARTHUR of LITTLE BRITANNY, and there is a romance with that title, reprinted in 1609."

I trouble you, Mr. Warton, with this long extract, because it is so very interesting, and I have such a great deal to say to you upon it, that nothing less, perhaps, would have answered either your purpose or mine.

Though I never met with the "*LIFE OF SIR MELIADO*," nor with any other notice of it, I must be content to suppose it to have actually been where you say it was. But you ought, certainly, to have been better acquainted with it before you had so peremptorily decided upon the meaning of the word "*BRITISH*," which, with equal absurdity and presumption, you would confine to BRETAGNE or Britany in France. To be sure, you are rather got into your Irish stile when you attempt to prove that *BRITISH* does NOT mean *ENGLISH*, as no one, I believe, excepting yourself, could possibly have imagined that it did. It is, at the same time, very curious, to find a person, who either is, or pretends to be, a scholar, hardly contending that this country was never called *BRITAIN*, nor its inhabitants *BRITISH*! That the sun gives no light, and the night brings no darkness! The notion is, in the utmost degree, contemptible and absurd. Armorica was by the French called *LA PETITE BRETAGNE*, by us, *LITTLE BRITAIN*, merely to distinguish it from the island of *GREAT BRITAIN*, by them stiled *LA GRANDE BRETAGNE*. The name *BRITISH* *may*, for aught I know, be common to both countries, but I firmly believe the inhabitants of *BRITANNY* were never so called, much less *distinguished*, by any writer, English or foreign, before the sagacious Mr. Warton (52). But, let the word *BRITISH* mean what it will, how does it connect with or apply to the quotation from Nicholas Antonio? He says nothing at all about *BRITISH*; he expressly tells us, that Martorell pretended to have translated the romance of *Tirante*, "*EX ANGLICA*," out of *ENGLISH*. I have not, in the whole

(51) You cannot even translate the simplest passage with common honesty. Antonio does not assert, that the book was ACTUALLY PRINTED at Valencia in that year; he only says, it WAS REPORTED SO; And the report was false.

(52) If there be any such book as "*The Life of Sir Meliado*," it is, without doubt, the romance of *MELIADUS DE LEONNOIS*, a petty king in *GREAT BRITAIN*, and one of the knights of the Round Table; whose story was translated out of French into Italian, and printed at Venice in 1558 and 1559, in two volumes octavo.

course of this strange history, been astonished at any-thing more than at your assertion that "the hero is a gentleman of BRETAGNE." Because I can onely conclude it to be a guess: and it happens to be as lucky as it was bold. You are not quite so fortunate, however, in your equally dogmatical position, that "the book was FIRST WRITTEN IN THE LANGUAGE OF THAT COUNTRY:" than which nothing can be more insupportable, more ill-grounded, or more false. I must, indeed, confess, that it was not without reason you concluded every one to be as ignorant about the matter as yourself; and that you might safely advance whatever you chose without the smallest fear of detection. But, alas! how miserably have you been deceived! John or Joanot Martorell, the author of the above romance of TIRANT LO BLANCH (which, by the way, was not printed at Valencia in 1480, but at Barcelona in 1497, and no where else during the 15th century) in his dedication thereof to Don Ferdinand, prince of Portugal, and duke of Viseo, brother of Alphonsus V. and then (*sci.* in 1460) presumptive heir to the crown, to which his son Emanuel afterwards succeeded, positively declares, that the history and acts of the said TIRANT were written in the English tongue, "EN LENGUA ANGLESA;" that he had TRANSLATED them out of THAT LANGUAGE INTO PORTUGUESE, at the direct instance of the above prince, who thought, that, as he (Martorell) had been sometime in England, "EN LA ILLA DE ANGLETERRA (53), he would know the tongue better than others; that he had since translated the book out of Portuguese into his native dialect the VALENCIAN (54); and apologises for the defects of his version, as being in some measure occasioned by the peculiar difficulties of the English language, which he had, in many places, found it impracticable to translate. But, as you appear to understand Valencian (55), I shall give you his own words: "*Car si d'faliments algũs hi son certament senyor nes en part causa da dita LENGUA ANGLESA de la qual en algunes partides es impossible poder be girar los vocables.*" It is strange enough, that an author, more especially of Martorells consequence, who is stiled "*lo magnífich e virtuos cavaller,*" should have the confidence to impose upon his patron not onely a feigned original, but a feigned command to translate it, and an imaginary translation too. This is an enigma we cannot at present solve. It is not impossible, however, that Martorell might actually pick up some part of his subject during his residence in England. What makes this conjecture the less

(53) In the suite, perhaps, of Peter duke of Coimbra, one of the sons of John I. who was here in the third year of king Henry VI. (1425) at whose court he was magnificently entertained, and made a knight of the Garter: An honour which Martorell has conferred upon the hero of his romance, whom he supposes to be the first that received it. As to prince Ferdinand, though he might never be in England, it is not improbable that he understood something of the language; being grandson of Philippa, sister of our Henry IV. and wife of the above John. He dyed in 1471, aged thirty; so that he could not well have been more than nineteen when he imposed the task of this translation upon Martorell.

(54) He onely lived, it appears, to finish the three first books; the fourth and last part is sayed to be translated "*a pregaries de la noble senyora dona ysabel de loris, per lo magnífich cavaller mossen marti ioban de galba.*"

(55) See before, p. 30.

improbable

improbable is the use he has made of the story of "*Comte gillem de uaroych*," (Guy of Warwick) which we know to have been then extant in English. The origin of THE GARTER, the magnificent celebration of the nuptials of the king of England (alluding, most likely, to those of Richard II.) with the king of France's daughter, and some few other particulars, he may, undoubtedly, have got here: Though one might, perhaps, be led to think that he has derived his principal information on these heads from old Froissart, a favourite historian during the continuance of chivalry. But, independent of his own assertions, the venial deceits of a romantic age, there is the strongest and most conclusive evidence, as well intrinsic as extrinsic, that Martorell, whether he wrote first in Portuguese or Valencian, was the original author. As to the work itself, it is a most ingenious and admirable performance, well deserving the praises bestowed upon it by Cervantes (56), and much beyond any thing of the kind ever produced in England, or even (if one dare venture to say it) capable of being so.

You will not desire me to take further notice of your assertion, that this romance was first written in the language of Britany. I have, I think, sayed enough to make you completely ashamed of yourself, if you have a particle of modesty in your composition. But what credit, let me ask, is a reader to place in the reveries and confident declarations of so ignorant, so false, and so conceited a writer?

Your HYPOTHESIS, as you call it, is so false, so groundless, so visionary, and absurd, that I am equally willing to believe it your own, and to leave you in peaceable possession of it. Neither have I any thing, at present, to say to "the most learned and ingenious M. La Croze;" of whom I must with shame acknowledge, I never before heard: If, therefor, it be such an amazing happiness to find one single person in the whole world of the same opinion with yourself, enjoy it.

That "our king Arthur" might be "sometimes called Arthur of Little Brittain," as he is supposed to have been king of both countries, is probable enough, though I do not believe it. I am, however, ready to allow that "there is a romance with that title," which may, for any thing I know to the contrary, have been "reprinted in 1609." But they who told you that should, at the same time, have informed you that Arthur of Little Britain, the hero of that romance, is a very different person from king Arthur of Great Britain. And so much for you, and your hypothesis.

P. 485.

The old version of Tasso, being registered by Ames, and at present existing, to my knowledge, in more libraries than one, is no such mighty discovery as you seem to flatter yourself. However, if you think its full title, and a specimen of the translators poetical talents, worthy of a place in your next

(56) See *Don Quixote*, p. 1. l. 1. c. 6. The romance of Tirante was, early in the 16th century, translated into Castilian; from thence into Italian, and about 30 or 40 years ago into French. The two latter translators were entire strangers to the original, of which there is not, perhaps, more than one single copy known to be extant.

edition, if your admirable history arrive at that honour, or even in the list of blunders,—“Emendations and additions,” I should say,—to Volume the third, you are heartily welcome to both. Ohely take care, I beseech you, and print them correctly; and I shall spare you the mortification of telling to whom you are obliged.

“Godfrey of Bulloigne, or the Recoverie of Hierusalem. An Heroicall poeme written in Italian by Seig. Torquato Tasso, and translated into English by R. C. Esquire: And now the first part containing five Cantos, Imprinted in both Languages. London Imprinted by Iohn Windet for Thomas Man dwelling in Pater noster-Row.” 4to.

begin. “I sing the goodly armes, and that Chieftaine
 “Who great Sepulchre of our Lord did free,
 “Much with his hande, much wrought he with his braine:
 “Much in that glorious conquest suffred hee:
 “And hell in vaine hitselfe opposde, in vaine
 “The mixed troopes Asian and Libick flee
 “To armes, for heauen him fauour’d, and he drew
 “To sacred ensignes his straid mates anew.”

The Italian text is on the opposite page. And The Address, “To the Reader” is dated “From Exeter the last of Februarie, 1594” and signed “C. H.” i. e. Christopher Hunt, who seems to have been the proprietor of the edition, and whose name, as it should appear from Ames, was prefixed to some copies instead of Mans. R. C. it may be, is *Richard Carew*.

I have at length, Mr. Warton, completed my design of exposing to the public eye a tolerable specimen of the numerous errors, falsities, and plagiarisms, of which you have been guilty in the course of your celebrated History. And, though I am conscious of having left considerable gleanings to any who may be inclined to follow me, I trust I have given you much reason to be sorry, and more to be ashamed: But whether my arguments will produce any such effects, I, really, neither know, nor care.

Next to the civil history of a country, an account of its language, literature, and poetry is, both to natives and strangers, the most interesting and important subject that can be conceived. A subject which requires and deserves the greatest talents and most unremitting industry. But this is a task for which you, of all men who have ever pretended to write history, are the least qualified. Your language, I confess, is easy and elegant; but your indolence in collecting and examining materials; and, beyond every thing, your ignorance of the subject, should have prevented you from engaging in a work of such great and general consequence; in which, whatever might be your progress, how uninformed soever you might esteem the bulk of your readers, you were certain, at last, of encountering detection and disgrace. You have entitled your performance the HISTORY of English Poetry. It is the extreme of *hyperbole*, and a gross insult to common sense! Could you flatter yourself
 that

that your *calling* it a HISTORY would induce the public to accept it for one. Alas! what do they perceive, but an injudicious *farrago*, a *gallimaufry* of things which both do and do not belong to the subject, thrown and jumbled together, without system, arrangement, or perspicuity:

—a dark

Illimitable ocean, without bound,
Without dimension, where length, breadth, and highth,
And time and place are lost!

The reader is bewildered in mazes; he turns round and round; and wanders backward and forward, and forward and backward, and at last finds himself just where he set out, heartily tired, and without anything to console him for the tediousness and labour of the journey;—unless he can pick a flower or two (for flowers there certainly are) from amongst the numerous weeds and briars which intercept his passage, and entangle his footsteps. Want of method, however, is the least fault of which you can be accused. If your collections had been authentic, though of themselves no history, nor capable, in your hands, of becoming one, they might at least have been useful to some subsequent writer better qualified for the purpose. But we see (as has been here sufficiently proved) you are not to be relied on in a single instance; the work being a continued tissue of falsehood from beginning to end. Suffer me, as a friend,—to your subject, at least,—to recommend it to you, to take all the advice and assistance you can get from the most able literary characters who may be willing to render you either, and immediately set about a diligent revision and correction (57) of your three volumes already published, deferring the remainder of the work till it be worthy of the light; do justice to those writers to whom you have been actually indebted; and omit that which is unnecessary, and which you have, from the vilest motive, inserted merely to extend and enlarge the work; even if, by so doing, your three volumes should be reduced to two: That the work may not remain a monument of disgrace to yourself and your country. Of all men living, the learned and intelligent editor of *THE CANTERBURY TALES* is the best able to afford you the requisite help; and, surely, in a matter of such universal concern, if you apply to him with sincerity, he will not withhold it. His publication of Chaucer is the most erudite, curious and valuable performance that (excepting onely that mine of literary treasure Dr. Hickeses *Thesaurus*, which never had, nor ever will have, its equal) has yet appeared in this country. I do not, however, mean to pronounce it entirely faultless: It undoubtedly contains some mistakes (58); but they are very few; and, being

(57) I would likewise wish you to be convinced of another fault which ought to be carefully rooted out; I mean your fulsome and disgusting *Egotism*. There is some difference between the *History of English Poetry*, and the *Life and Opinions of Thomas Warton*.

(58) Such as his supposing Chaucers lines to contain eleven syllables; an idea as just as that 3 and 3 make 7:—his adopting and misspelling certain words contrary to the evidence of all the MSS. he consulted:—a few erroneous notions with respect to Chaucers language, and the nature and history of the English tongue:—with some others, perhaps, of still less consequence. From all which, however, it is to be wished so excellent a work were totally free'd,

chiefly

chiefly confined to matter of opinion, will be thought rather trifling than important, rather innocent than dangerous. Even the *errors* of SUCH MEN are intitled to respect. And, for the later periods of our literary history, who is there so well informed, so judicious, or so liberal, as the worthy and amiable writer of the "Essay on the Learning of Shakespeare?" Thus assisted, Mr. War-ton, you might, probably, render your work, in reality, what you have had the modesty to entitle it. Not that I have, after all, the slightest expectation of your taking any further trouble about the matter; unless, indeed, the sale of the revised work should appear likely to produce you some considerable advantage. However, you are equally obliged to me for my good advice, whether you embrace it or not. And as I am satisfied that you will continue to write upon the subject, so long as you can find materials, however flimsy, or purchasers, however simple, I beg leave to recommend to a respectable department in your *seventh* volume, or rather to a volume or two of its own, a Virgin Article for which I have the highest regard:—The Poetical Annals of the British Nursery:—With two learned Dissertations—I. On the origin and use of the ancient *Lullabies*; II. On the GESTA ROMANORUM of the Nur-sery—Mother Goose's Tales. You could not reasonably desire a more ample field for the display of your amazing erudition in all its branches. Your "episode" (and the more "disproportionate" it is, the better) on a theatre, which, as you very justly observe, is "of the lowest species, and the highest antiquity," will be allowed to comprehend the whole history of the genuine mode of scenic representation, from Thespis to Flockton; interspersed with a variety of surprising observations, and unheard of facts. These will eke out many a loose and easy page; while your disquisitions upon Puerile Architecture, or the art of constructing Castles of Cards, will not only involve the rise, progress, and grand arcana of Free-masonry, which are all comprised in this curious and antique process, but give you, at the same time, a fine opportunity of exhibiting your whole fund of knowledge in the science, of which you have induced us to believe that you are perfect master; and by not writing, at least not publishing, your promised work, have been wise enough not to undeceive us. One cannot easily imagine a more pleasing or fruitful subject, nor a historian better qualified to do it justice; unless, indeed, your want of fidelity and care may be thought an insuperable objection: But I am not without hope that even the present address will have the good fortune to make you a little more cautious on those heads in your future lucubrations.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient,
and most humble servant.

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1. The first part of the document is a list of names and titles, including "The Hon. Mr. Justice" and "The Hon. Mr. Justice".